

Twilight of the Goths

The Rise and Fall of the Kingdom of Toledo c. 565 – 711



By Harold Livermore

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El Greco's "Toledo", by courtesy of Sr L. Caballero, Museo de El Greco, Toledo; The helmet, after Condurachi and Daicoviciu; The page from Ulfila, from the University Library, Uppsala, Sweden; The *solidus* of Theoderic is from the National Numismatic Museum in Rome; The votive crown of King Recceswinth, by permission of the National Archaeological Museum, Madrid; The remaining photographs are by courtesy of the Spanish Tourist Office in London.

FOREWORD

If an explanation is needed, I applied the title of this monograph to a review of essays on *The Visigoths from the Migration Period to the Seventh Century*, edited by Peter Heather, in 1999, in an ethnographical series (Studies in Historical Archaeoethnology, Vol. 4, Woodbridge, Boydell). My column, however, appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement* under a different heading. As is usual, some of the contributions were excellent, others less so. I thought that the general effect gave too much importance to the tribal origins of the Goths as opposed to the formative experience of service in the late Roman army. I could not set out my reasons in a review, and it seemed incumbent to provide a balanced version by one author. My balance is from having published general histories of Portugal and of Spain, and of the formation of both modern Peninsular states, recalling the fact that the Germanic domination of the Iberian Peninsula includes also that of the Sueves. The suggestion comes from Professor Keith Cameron, who has read my text to the the last comma to my benefit. I alone am responsible for surviving errors.

Harold Livermore
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1

INTRODUCTION

When Luis Díez del Corral wrote his *Rape of Europe* in 1954, he asked: Who were these Visigoths who failed our Europe so abjectly? Were they already Spaniards?¹ The question comes in a chapter headed 'Europe seen from Spain', under two quotations, one from Camões: 'Behold here comes noble Spain like the head of all Europe', and the other from Cervantes: 'Enough, said Don Quixote to himself, it would be preaching in the wilderness to seek to induce this rabble by requests to undertake any deed of valour... God help us, but this whole world is naught but schemes and devices all working at cross-purposes.'²

In European terms, this begs other questions: Were there already Spaniards in the sixth century? Were those Visigoths who sacked Rome in 410 and abjectly lost Spain to the Muslims in 711 the people, who emerged as barbarians from what is now TransDanubian Romania, also the same people as those who were idealized in fifteenth century Spain as the very pattern and mould of Castilian nobility and chivalry? *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*. Change, politicians often say, is to be welcomed: they are in a position to profit by its favours and soften its reverses. Many Romans were inclined to seek the Golden Age in the remote past, as did Don Quixote in addressing his audience of shepherds: he hoped, with divine aid, to restore it.

Divergent and opposing perceptions of the Visigoths still exist. For those who follow the destinies of the Roman world they are unquestionably barbarian intruders. But Germanists may consider the Visigoths almost as renegades, detached from the northern world.³ The difference is largely accounted for by the fact that remains of the German world are mainly physical, while Romanism survives as an intellectual force. As St Isidore, the great figure of the seventh century, foresaw, the future lay in the fusion of Roman culture with Gothic strength. The great champion of the Roman tradition could not have foretold the disaster that followed two generations after his death.

Those who follow the Roman tradition tend to seek the special nature of the Visigoths in their remote barbarian past. Yet they rarely dissent from the view that there is little trace left of the Visigothic presence in the territories they once possessed.⁴ It is therefore necessary to temper the search for some essential clue to the Visigoths by emphasizing the influence on them of their prolonged contact with Rome, and particularly their service in the Roman army whose

habits and outlook they adopted, not to mention that of the wives, Romanized or not, they acquired in the course of their wanderings, which led them to the Spains, where they founded their kingdom of Toledo. With this in mind, we may start with the later Roman world, on which they impinged with such devastating if transitory effect.

The Romans came into direct contact with the Visigoths in the time of Constantine I, who crossed the lower Danube into Transylvania and contracted some Visigoths to serve in his Eastern army. At that time most of the Spains had been subdued, the east and south for nearly half a millennium, and presented no danger to the empire. The eastern seaboard had been taken over as a protectorate from the Greeks, who gave it the name of Iberia, related to the great River Ebro. The south had been conquered after the defeat of Hannibal in the Second Punic War. The Phoenicians were traders rather than colonists, but their heirs the Carthaginians had at a late stage set up an empire, of which Cartagena, or New Carthage, serves as a memorial. Its main source of wealth had been the native kingdom of Tartessos which controlled the valley of the Baetis, now the Guadalquivir, or Great River by antonomasia. The Romans picked up the names Span and Hispania, which have given Spain and Hispalis, Seville. They continued to distinguish Nearer Spain, or Hither Spain, Citerior, from Hispania Ulterior, Further Spain, what lay beyond. Much of the interior remained unsubdued, if not unvisited, until the last native hero Viriatus was killed by treachery in 136 BC; his Latin name alludes to the Celtic bangles or circlets, *viriae*, he wore. Roman forces then soon reduced the hill-top settlements of the north-west, leaving only the north coast as the still-militarized frontier or *limes*.

The process of Romanization began from the south and proceeded up the western side, though less rapidly on the high tableland of the centre, the dry meseta, less amenable to agriculture and more sparsely populated. The Iberian Peninsula was still the Spains, Hispaniae in the plural. They were held together by marchable roads, bridges and posting-houses constructed under the supervision of Roman surveyors and military engineers. Cities and towns copied Roman architecture and institutions and their leaders prized themselves on their Latinity. The south was already accustomed to domination from beyond the seas and acquired Roman dress, language and habits almost everywhere. The Romans favoured flat and arable land and open settlements, so that the fortified hill-tops were either abandoned or greatly modified. In Baetica men wore the toga and went unarmed as in Rome itself. Elsewhere the Roman superstructure overwhelmed the variety of indigenous communities.

The division into Citerior and Ulterior was replaced by the creation of provinces. Baetica was peaceable and senatorial, with Seville as the usual seat of the civil administration. The once-Greek east was almost as Roman, but took its name of Tarraconensis from Tarraco, Tarragona, a stronghold and port which served as the point of entry for troops and supplies sent to man the northern frontier, for which a single legion usually sufficed. The Emperor Augustus had subdued the mountaineers of the Asturias and Cantabria and rewarded his veterans, *emeriti*, with grants of land about Emeritensis, Mérida, which became the centre of the vast province of Lusitania, a name chosen to recall the scene of Rome's earliest successes in dominating Ulterior: it had become the most Roman city in the west, endowed with numerous monuments. The large and straggling area between Cartagena and Toledo on the Tagus was known as Cartaginensis, preserving the name of Carthage. The fifth and last province to be

constituted was Gallaecia, the north-west, formed by the Antonines early in the third century: its inhabitants kept their tribal conventions, since it was made up of the three *conventus*, or local administrative centres, the Braccarenses, with their capital at Braga; the Lucenses, governed from Lucus, Lugo, and the Astures, who obeyed the governor of Asturica, or Astorga: the first two were mainly Celtic, but Braga, emanating from one or more Roman villae or estates, was the more Roman and acquired primacy as the seat of the Roman church. Lugo still retains its unique circuit of Roman walls, while Astorga had few monuments, being mainly a centre for recruiting men, horses and supplies from the Asturian mountains. Since the time of the Emperor Galba the seat of the Seventh Legion had been at Leon, to which it gave its name. The military had their own *agger* or separate land and peasantry. In the course of time, the Legion was gradually Hispanized and various units were sent for periods of service in different parts of the empire, contributing to the spread of military institutions, customs and speech as effectively as Roman or Latin culture. With the exception of one far-ranging incursion by barbarians from the north, the Spains became almost a haven of tranquillity in the third century. The many troubles of the empire were attributed to the rivalries of ambitious governors of large and well-armed provinces who became usurpers or tyrants in their attempts to seize power. The Spains remained quiet and passive. Baetica was sufficiently defended by the Mediterranean Sea: the southern *limes* was far away in Africa beyond Volubilis, and Tingitana or Tangier was formed into a separate province and attached to the Spains as a kind of buffer or safety-cushion. The surplus of agricultural produce in the south was applied to the needs of Rome itself as the City outgrew its more immediate resources.

The need for radical reform was perhaps less evident then than it seems today. The senate consisted of a few extremely rich families with possessions in many provinces and was too obsessed with self-preservation of its privileged position to risk intervening: suffice it that the City was eternal. The Emperor Diocletian was powerful enough to seek a solution in dynasticism. To prevent strong governors from attempting to seize power, he divided the larger provinces, doubling the total number: this did not affect the Spains. He split the empire into two Parts, each with its own army, its own Augustus and Caesar. Either Part might rally to the aid of the other, but they should never fall out between themselves, the two imperial families being bound into a single dynasty by marriage alliances. One law, one language and one coinage would further assure unity.

However sound in theory, the arrangement did not last. The family does not guarantee perfect peace, nor equal ability. When the senior Augustus disappears, the junior takes his place: which Caesar then becomes junior Augustus? Powerful governors were indeed cut down to size, but power was concentrated in the imperial families, who were even more ambitious since the prize was greater and nearer to them. The consulship became a reward conferred by the emperor, and the senate continued to enjoy its splendid impotence.

2

LATE ROMANS AND EARLY GOTHs

The long reign of the Emperor Constantine I saw the incorporation of some Visigoths as a minor part of the Eastern army. It also brought into play the dormant force of religion. The emperor as Pontifex Maximus was the head of the Roman cult, himself divinized after his death with a promise of immortality. He was the subject and ally of Jupiter, and his armies fought under the sign of Jupiter, the Best, the Greatest, Jupiter Optimus Maximus. Emperors had risen and fallen so often that the belief wore thin. The senate, educated in all the complexity of mythology, burnt incense to the statue of Victory. The other divinities of the pantheon had dwindled into shadows of themselves. Laws, walls, regalia and other trappings remained sacred. So long as they did not trespass, other cults and psychopomps were permitted, subject to local conditions.

All this was called into question by the spread of Christianity. It had begun three centuries earlier, when its Founder was crucified at the behest of his supposed peers with the consent of a Roman governor of no exalted standing. His teaching had been oral but the message was carried in person or by letter far and wide by a small band of enthusiasts, many of whom had fared as cruelly as he. His promise was of a kingdom not of this world, and many previous emperors had opposed it, some violently. Despite its alien origin its cosmogony corresponded to that described by Vergil in Book VI of the *Aeneid*. It accepted the secular terrestrial divisions established by the Roman empire, both present and future.

Constantine I accepted it and attributed military success to it. He united the empire while retaining the two Parts, and founded a new capital for the Eastern Part at Byzantium, renamed Constantinople, which was Christian, officially at least, from the start. The Eastern Part had its own senate, but was more mercantile and variegated, following the modes of Greek philosophy, while the west was poorer in worldly wealth, less inclined to speculate and more intent on the use of force to assert discipline. The East, as the first apostles knew, was more concerned with speculation about the divine nature. Christianity had reached the Spains from merchants or soldiers serving in the imperial armies. It was an urban religion, and traders established it in the cities, where also the Roman grip was strongest. Many Hispanic cities came to have their own martyrs who became patrons of churches and basilicas. The Spains had not produced tyrants or usurpers and did not now produce heretics. Constantine's toleration and conversion was accompanied by the celebration of the first council of the

Spanish church at Iliberri, Granada, at which nineteen bishops and twenty-four priests, drawn also from other provinces, adopted canons or rules by which Christians must abide and distinguish themselves from others. By contrast, the East was more concerned to find terms to define what was divine, reaching a consensus at Nicaea in 325. Its creed did not satisfy everyone or put an end to controversy: dissentients were branded heretics or 'choosers'. Within the bosom of the church, many sought to renounce the world and seek the good life as hermits or monks: there came to be hundreds of monastic communities scattered from Asia Minor to Egypt, who obeyed each their own abbot, or abba, which those in the West might see as a defiance of the authority of the bishop, who obeyed their own leader, the bishop of Rome, later called pope.

The debate about the Founder had shifted from his message to his credentials. He was a man, but also the only son of God and therefore different from men. Among those who sought a simple and logical solution was Arius, a priest of Alexandria, whose arguments many churchmen found convincing. In the east there was much discussion of Arius's ideas: not all bishops were willing to condemn him as a heretic. Constantine's first concern was the restored unity of his empire: a strong Spanish bishop Hosius of Cordova, advised Constantine that strict orthodoxy was preferable to a broad church. Most of his subjects were still not Christians of either sort. The death of Arius did not diminish the influence of his teaching: rather the contrary, since he could no longer be questioned. But that of the emperor was the prelude to a new round of disorders. The empire was divided between his three sons, of whom the third, Constantius, favoured Arianism. He was also the longest-lived and came near to restoring the unity of the empire with the consequent acceptance of Arianism, itself professed by various groups. It was under this dispensation that some of the Visigoths who continued to serve in the Eastern army began to accept Christianity in its Arian variant. For barbarians this came to have a significant advantage in that it rendered them independent from the bishop of Rome and allowed them to appoint their own episcopacy who imposed their beliefs on the rest of the clergy. But as yet very few Goths were touched. They remained illiterate, though they remembered their own heroes: it is therefore not possible to say if they remembered that their ancestors had been the first barbarians to slay a Roman emperor in battle: this was Decius in August 250.

Constantius attempted to assert himself by violence. This was exercised against members of the imperial family descended from the first Christian emperor including those related by marriage. Constantius had elevated Gallus as his Caesar, but Gallus did not last long and was survived by his younger brother Julian, who was educated in Athens and took to the study of religion and philosophy. He also proved a successful soldier and having paved the way to the empire for himself, declared himself in favour of the traditional religion of the Romans of old. His erratic course earned for him the epithet of 'the apostate'. Emperors who were also philosophers had become almost unknown since the days of Marcus Aurelius. But Julian imposed himself as a military commander, and on his early death on campaign, the choice of emperors reverted to the clique of generals, who formed the high command and especially the imperial guard. Military power came first, and dynasticism and religious conviction were subordinate to it.



Helmet of a Gothic leader, 4th–5th c., from Ciurmești, Romania

3

THE AGE OF ALARIC

Who then were these Goths who were to sack Rome, put an end to its glory and form their own empire in the western prefecture? According to myth, they were a Germanic people sprung from Scandinavia who had crossed the Baltic and landed with the Gepids on the East German or Polish shore. They pushed their way south and east to the Carpathians and divided; one body, the Visigoths, entered Dacia, while others resorted to the steppes of the Ukraine and the Crimea, where they were known as Greutings or Ostrogoths.

They were certainly Germanic and neither nomads nor navigators, but peasant-farmers, and had absorbed other peoples on whom they imposed their command and language. The Dacio-Getae had some contact with a Romanized population, and their use of wagons implies a knowledge of woodcraft, and that of skins or pelts of hunting and sheep-raising. The archaeology of Romania made important finds between 1950 and 1970, and shows the complexity of races that had inhabited or passed through Transylvania.⁵ In 1830, the treasure of Pietroasa was uncovered in the midst of Gothic territory, and was thought significant enough to be exhibited in London. It comprised an array of vessels, *fibulae* and ear-rings of gold, often inlaid with coloured glass or stones, of a workmanship comparable to the treasure of Tartessos found at Carambolo near Seville in 1959. It was then attributed to the Visigothic king Athanaric, who died at Constantinople in 381, but later ascribed to the Ostrogoths of the fifth century. A bronze helmet found at Ciurmești is surmounted by a crow with bright red eyes, outspread wings and its head forward. It is no work of farm-hands, but of skilled craftsmen with an artistic feeling in getting the greatest effect from the black bird's posture. It was made for a potentate to strike awe in the beholder. The Goths were not the first nor the most civilized inhabitants of Transylvania, but were aggressive and as much wedded to their own language and customs as the Romans to theirs.

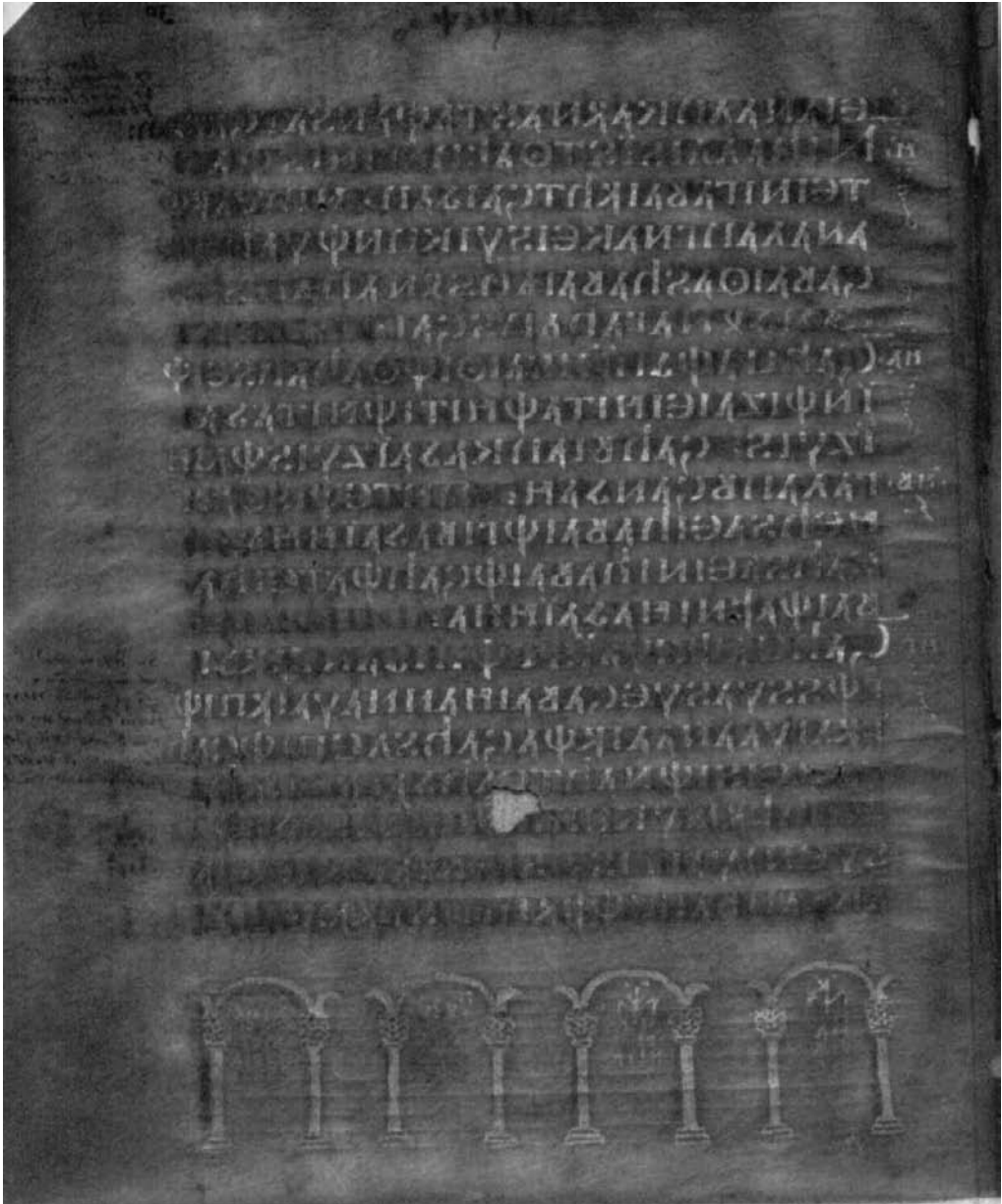
How much the Goths of Spain knew of their own past remains unknown. Their deeds were retailed by word of mouth in epic poems. Their customs have survived, despite the Latinized laws of their court, in the oral tradition that distinguished Old Castile from the rest of the Spains in the Middle Ages, and their oral epics are reflected in the uneven metre of the *Poema de mio Cid*, which commemorates the career of Rodrigo Díaz de Bivar, who died in 1099, after carving out a domain for himself in Muslim Valencia.⁶

From early times the Greeks navigated the shore of the Black Sea and founded their cities of Tomi and Hystria near the mouths of the Danube. Herodotus, writing c. 480-420 BC describes the uncouth practices of the Scythians and mentions the Getae as the most manly and orderly of the barbarians. Greek architects required the services of native labour, and introduced their crafts and arts, which were imitated by others who were not slaves to classical tradition but used their own eyes. Greek and other merchants traded in luxuries, in clothes and in food, often needed since the barbarians were improvident husbandmen. Among the Romans, Ovid was exiled to Tomi, where he wrote a flood of doleful poems: he claims that he was obliged to learn Sarmatian and Gothic, which may be doubted.⁷ He died, still yearning for the court of Augustus, in 18 AD.

After the formation and abandonment of Roman Dacia, the Goths come into clearer focus. The Scythians disappeared or were absorbed, but their name was bestowed on the Roman province that straddled the lower Danube: in later parlance a Scythian may mean a Roman, a Greek or a Gothic intruder. Constantine I subdued the nearer Goths, building a bridge, probably of wood, over the Danube. He engaged some Goths as federates, in which case their ruler received a subsidy in return for military service, the barbarians forming their own units and keeping their own customs. Those who enlisted in the Roman army renounced their own kings, took pay and arms and followed Roman orders. The Goths did not have coin of their own and were not merchants. The subsidies, whether in gold or in kind, passed back to Greek and other merchants. If payment was withheld, the barbarians might rebel or pass over to the Roman bank. They might also be disciplined by limiting trade to two specified crossing-places. Romans and merchants had the advantage of possessing barges or ships, employed for the movement of troops: most barbarians had only rafts or boats.

Goths continued in Roman service and formed part of Julian's army in his last campaign of 363. They were sufficiently numerous to participate – on the losing side – in the struggle for the succession which followed.⁸ Some too were settled within the empire, where they took wives and it was supposed that they would ultimately become Romans. At the same period some Goths adopted Christianity in its form devised by Arius, who died in 331. This variant was professed by the Emperor Valens. Ulfila, the 'bishop of the Goths', is credited with the translation of the Testaments into the Gothic language which had no previous written form. Ulfila was of mixed race; his father was a man of some standing with adherents. He was consecrated by Eusebius of Nicomedia (328-337), later of Constantinople (337-341). Arianism had been condemned at Nicaea in 325, but was condoned at Sirmium in 357, where Bishop Ulfila was present, and also at Antioch and Alexandria, the greatest commercial cities of the Eastern empire.

Little is known of Ulfila's missionaries. He himself perhaps never returned to Gothia. It was, or became, usual to employ priests of confidence in negotiations between Romans and barbarians. On April 12 372, Saba and some others won martyrdom by being drowned, on orders from above, in the River Musaeus or Buzău. A letter describing his passion made him widely known.⁹ But the work of the missionaries had not then gone very far.¹⁰ A single reference makes Queen Gaatha, 'wife of the king of the other Goths', the person who collected the relics of the martyrs of 372. Ulfila came of a family of notables and may have approached the wife of a ruler.¹¹



Page from Ulfila's Gothic Bible, c. 380, copied c. 500.

Although a great Spanish medievalist, Claudio Sánchez Albornoz, thought that the Goths elected kings 'democratically', this has more to do with the ill-starred Spanish Republic of 1931 than with history. The Goths were governed by leaders known to the Romans as *optimates* or magnates, and to themselves as *megisthanes*, the Gothic oblique case of a corruption of Latin *Magister* (*militum*), a general.¹² These leaders met in time of war to choose

a commander or king from among their number. There was no question of participation by their inferiors unless by shouting. If the king or commander failed, he was at once replaced and killed. It was no place for a woman or for a youth unable to enforce his decisions. Their religion had probably been of protective idols charged with guarding their villages and crops. The case of Saba implies that their own priests were appointed by the *optimates*, who perhaps saw Christian priests as a threat to their authority.

From about 370 the challenge to the Ostrogoths came from the Huns, mounted bands who descended on the villages, took what they wanted and burned them before riding off with their loot. This may not have been entirely new, but the Goths, who had absorbed other peasant peoples, could not dominate the bands of nomads. One of their kings, Hermanric, on being worsted, took his own life.¹³ The report soon spread. Many Ostrogoths fled to the Visigoths, communicating their alarm. Ammianus says that there came a rumour that a barbarous multitude of unknown people had driven them from their homes by sudden force and was roving in confusion about the Danube. At first, such reports were ignored since in those parts wars were often not heard of by those dwelling at some distance until they were over. But when the rumours were confirmed by delegates with prayers for the refugees to be received, the news caused more joy than fear: flatterers congratulated the emperor (Valens) on the windfall of recruits that would join his army and make it invincible: officials were sent with transport to ensure that no (future) destroyer of the Roman state or carrier of the fatal plague was left behind. Eunapius says more simply that the Huns overran the Scythians and Goths, who were in danger of being exterminated.¹⁴

The Romans show little of the curiosity about barbarians displayed by Herodotus. The Goths are sometimes called Getae, the form used by Ovid and also Claudian, whose long poem is headed *De bello Gothico* (403 AD). Procopius, writing in Greek in 550, when the Goths were already in Toledo, uses 'Gotthike', with tau and theta. He then appears to confuse the term Gothic with Germanic, saying that there were many Gothic nations but the most important were the Goths, Vandals, Visigoths and Gepids. In ancient times some were called Saramathae and Melanchaeni, 'black cloaks' – this may refer to fleeces or pelts. They were distinguishable only in name: all had pale bodies and light hair and were tall and handsome, and had the same religion, all were Arians and had one language called Gothic. They used to dwell on the Ister or Danube until Alaric separated them (*Histories*, III, ii, 57.)

In view of their long association with the Romans, it is surprising that no particularly Gothic words occur in Roman texts. The single exception is in an anonymous poem called *De conviviiis barbaris*. It says:

Inter eils Gothicum scopia matzia ia drincan
non sudet (audet) quisquam dignos educere versos.

This means: In Gothic, 'Here, innkeeper (?) meat and drink' let nobody sweat to make a proper (Latin) verse of this.¹⁵

In the years 372 and 376, the rule of the Pannonian emperors, Valentinian and Valens, was already shaken by the sudden death of Valentinian I at Brigettio, now Szony in Hungary, on

November 15 375. His brother Valens to whom he had given the Eastern Part had not proved a successful commander: Valentinian I made his capital at Treveris, Trier, in the Rhineland. Some of his commanders were Franks, who considered themselves truer Romans and resented his brutality. When they adopted Christianity it was not in the Arian form, which struck no roots in the Gauls. The two Pannonian emperors were at best indifferent. Valentinian had legalized his succession by marrying Justina, the widow of Maxentius, who had been considered emperor for three years before being branded a usurper and removed. She bore him his heir Gratian whom, in 367, he made Augustus in the presence of his army at Amiens without reference to the Roman senate. Gratian was then eight, and though educated in the Roman fashion by the poet Ausonius of Bordeaux did not please all the Gaulish commanders. Having calmed the Alamanni with a campaign beyond the Rhine, Valentinian prepared another expedition against the Quads, whose king, Gabinius, had been invited to a feast by the Roman commander and treacherously assassinated. Bands of Quads and others then crossed the frontier and roved in the Pannonias. Valentinian marched in haste from Trier and met their delegates at Szony. On hearing them explain that the raiders were adventurers for whom they should not be held responsible, the emperor burst into a fit of ire so violent that he suffered a fatal stroke in the midst of his harangue. The army at once acclaimed the emperor's younger son Valentinian II, a boy of four in 375. The reason for this is uncertain. The elder son Gratian was the successor in the West, and the Gaulish commanders may have had no wish to consult Valens, who was far away and had not proved capable: Zosimus says that he could not cope with public affairs and the administration of justice was taken out of his hands.¹⁶ On his first campaign, the Goths took to the hills and there was no conflict, and on the next in 369, he had concluded a truce with King Athanaric.

The Western leaders neither wanted to risk a break with the dynasty nor to perpetuate uncontrolled Pannonians. Gratian was now a promising young leader: perhaps his main defect was that he continued to favour Pannonians and, even worse, the mounted guard of heathen Alans, strangers in the western world. Early in 378 Gratian led a large force from Trier against the Alamanni. His uncle Valens was faced with a major crisis. He had severely punished the Goths in Roman service who had opposed the Pannonian succession. On his first campaign, he had offered a reward for every Gothic head brought in, but had then granted land within the empire to the refugees who clamoured on the Gothic bank to be admitted. They may have included some Huns or Alans, but were mainly Greutings or Ostrogoths bringing their families and possessions. When they began to maraud, the Visigoth Fritigern refused to march against them, at least without payment in advance for the campaign.

The situation was then only a little clearer than it seems now.¹⁷ The Visigoths who had served Rome were inclined to seek imperial protection, and the Ostrogoths, less familiar with Roman ways, were divided, some joining Alans and Huns – with their horses and wagons for carrying families. Others, led by King Athanaric, were disposed to resist, but, as his followers deserted or were depleted, he retired.

Valens was at Antioch, a rich trading-city often called upon to finance campaigns against the Persians, traditional rivals of the Greeks. He returned in haste to Constantinople and marched to Adrianople, an arms-factory and garrison-town, brushing aside Gothic blocks and rejecting

a mission from Fritigern to negotiate. He might have received a second approach, but his troops were already engaged. He left his baggage at Adrianople and marched out on the morning of April 9 378, reaching the barbarian camp after mid-day. It was a ring of wagons, or laager. A sudden charge by Alan cavalry took his infantry by surprise. It did not recover, and he was killed, with 35 tribunes and other officers and a large part of his army. Mounted messengers carried the news to Gratian on the upper Danube. The young co-emperor might have urged caution, but he had only light troops, which might not have sufficed, even if his uncle had waited for him.

The victors were 'all the Goths', who included sundry others. Triumphant bands scattered over Thrace. They could not reach Constantinople, which was defended by African horse. It was decided to call on the younger Theodosius, lately a respected governor of Moesia and enjoying his *otium* in Spain, where he had married Aelia Flacilla, the heiress to a land-owning family in Gallaecia, who presented him with his first son, Arcadius, in the same year. He arrived at Sirmium in January 379, and Gratian provided him with two Frankish generals, Arbogastes and Bauto, and gave him on loan half of the border provinces of Pannonia and Illyricum. He arrived at the port of Thessalonica on June 17, and made it his headquarters from which he set about the task of restoring order. It was a formidable undertaking, and to replenish the Eastern army he enlisted large numbers of Visigoths with promises of reward and promotion. This was nothing new but its large scale; hitherto all who dwelled on Roman soil became Romans and had been required to abjure their kingship and customs: if they became Christians, so much the better.

Theodosius was recognized as emperor and made consul for 380. He entered Constantinople on November 28 380, where he resumed negotiations with the Goths. Armed barbarians continued undisciplined and demanded food in the markets without paying: it was necessary to call troops from Egypt to impose order. More barbarians continued to cross the Danube. There were fears that the 'scythians' would be overrun and exterminated. They were followed by King Athanaric, who opened negotiations but died outside Constantinople two weeks later. He was given an honourable funeral, and his opportune demise removed for the moment the difficulty of settling a barbarian king on imperial soil. Talks were resumed with Fritigern and others. The agreements were oral and fortified by oaths and pledges: details have not been preserved. If Theodosius was successful, it was at the cost of his tax-payers. Although he was emperor, he was not a member of the imperial family and junior to the youth Gratian, who had problems of a different sort in the Spains, where there was no Arianism, but a rift between Christian catholics, and a division between Christians and pagans.¹⁸

In about 370, Priscillian, a Gallaecian landowner, began to urge the upper class to study the religion it professed, performing ascetic retreats away from sinful cities. His teaching appealed to many in the poorer region of Gallaecia. In the Eastern Part, voluntary poverty, celibacy and monastic communion would not have been questioned: the Desert Fathers had hundreds of hermitages and monasteries, but in the Roman Spains his evangelism alarmed the metropolitan bishop of Lusitania and others, who denounced him for heresy and magic. In October 380, a dozen bishops met at Saragossa, famous for its many martyrs, and condemned him. He appealed to Rome, but Bishop Damasus would not override a metropolitan and a council and denied him a hearing. His friends obtained his election to the

see of Avila, that high, cold and frugal town on the meseta, *tierra de cantos y santos*. He and his admirers in Aquitania appealed to the Emperor Gratian, a sufficiently orthodox young man. But while Gratian was absent on campaign with his guard of Alans, Trier was seized by a usurper, a Spaniard named Magnus Maximus governing the Britains, where he was proclaimed and crossed the Channel to seize Trier. Gratian returned to find the city barred to him. He retired to Lyon, the capital of the large region known as Lugdunensis, where he was assassinated in October 383.

Magnus Maximus had perhaps counted on the favour of Theodosius, his fellow-Spaniard and as orthodox as himself, but Theodosius was far away and busy with other matters, and did not interfere until the murder of Gratian. Thus it was Magnus Maximus who confirmed the death-sentence on Priscillian: he was executed with two clergy and three laymen.¹⁹ The co-emperor usurper took courage from Theodosius' detachment to attempt to negotiate with the dowager Empress Justina, who lived with her younger son and daughters at Milan. In 387 as the boy reached adolescence, Magnus Maximus lost patience, was made consul for 388 in Rome and prepared to enter Italy from the north. Justina fled to Thessalonica and besought Theodosius to defend her son. He placed his Frankish general Arbogastes in command and Magnus Maximus was killed at Aquileia in July-August 388. Theodosius had been left a widower by the death of his Gallaecian wife; their second son named Honorius, was born in September 384. Justina took the opportunity to marry him to her daughter Galla. Zosimus says that Justina arrayed Galla to catch the emperor's eye, which may well be so, but the match was to Theodosius' advantage since it brought him into the reigning family and dynasty, whose only male member was the youth Valentinian II.

In the East, Theodosius was in charge, but his barbarian recruits were too numerous to be rewarded equally. His Eastern subjects distrusted Goths the more because of the burden imposed by paying them.²⁰ At Tomi on the Black Sea, the garrison despaired of resisting the swarm of 'scythians' until the governor showed by his valour that they could prevail: he was admonished for contravening the emperor's intentions. The horde was commanded by the Goth Odotheus, not otherwise known. When Promotus, magister for Thrace, received a request or demand from a horde to cross, he arranged a trap so that when they tried to cross by night, the Roman ships were placed together and sank them and slaughtered many illegal immigrants. This was probably in October 386: Promotus was given a training command and put under the orders of Stilicho. The surviving intruders were placed in Thrace and pardoned. They then overran the province.

In his negotiations, Theodosius came to rely on Stilicho, the son of a Vandal and a Roman lady, endowed with persuasive manners, a knowledge of the Germanic tongue and barbarian brashness. In 387 he was entrusted with a mission to the Persian court. The old Sapor II was disinclined to risk further wars. On his death, his heir Sapor III sent an embassy to announce his reign. After an interval Stilicho was despatched to prolong the existing truce which he did by ceding the lion's share of Armenia, leaving about a fifth to be governed by satraps appointed by the Romans.²¹ It does not now sound like successful diplomacy, but it brought some relief to his overburdened master. At about the same time, Theodosius gave him in marriage Serena, his adopted daughter and child of his Spanish brother Honorius. Their son Eucherius was born in 388.²²

The most famous of the Visigoths Alaric makes his appearance in these years. He did not aspire to be a Gothic king so much as general of the Roman army, recognized as the best of his time, and acted with all the independence that suited his ambition. His presence seems not to be noted before 386, when many of those who came with Odotheus were treated as defeated foes rather than federates. Opposition by the merchants to the burden of taxation was the probable cause of the Revolt of the Statues at Antioch in which the effigies of the emperors were torn down. In 388 Theodosius was again consul, and appointed Rufinus Master of the Offices and senior civilian prefect in the East. He was not on the best of terms with Promotus, the senior of the four or five *magistri militum*, who aspired to see the young Arcadius married to his daughter. Promotus died in battle in 391, and his command passed to Stilicho. Rufinus, made consul for 392, cherished similar ambitions, but became chief minister to Arcadius, who in the event married Aelia Eudoxia, daughter of the late Frankish general Bauto. The prominence of Gaulish Franks in Eastern affairs arose from Gratian's sending of Arbogastes and Bauto to Theodosius and to his success in defending Valentinian II: Arbogastes had been left in the West to serve as tutor to the boy emperor and had brought the Gauls into line. On the death of the dowager Justina, Arbogastes arrogated to himself the command of all the Western armies. When Valentinian attempted to show his authority by dismissing him, he ignored the order and sought a more suitable master, Eugenius. In the struggle that followed, Valentinian was killed at Lyon in May 392. Arbogastes and Eugenius sent missions to Theodosius to explain the circumstances and seek recognition: they received no reply.

Theodosius then listened to the appeals of his wife Galla on behalf of her brother. He was now the sole heir to the Pannonian legacy, and when Galla had given birth to his youngest child named Galla Placidia, and died, he prepared to strike back. His elder son was already his successor in the East, and he made his younger son Honorius, Augustus in November 393 at the age of nine, and entrusted him to the care of Stilicho and Serena. Having disposed of the several commands, he left for Italy in the spring of 394. Before leaving, he summoned the Goths to Constantinople for a feast. One faction led by the Scythian Fravitta was in favour of accepting his terms, while others led by Eriulf disagreed. When Fravitta killed Eriulf with his own hand, the imperial guard intervened to prevent the quarrel from spreading. Zosimus' account is only part of the truth, but Theodosius mobilized his supporters without Fravitta, who was probably thought necessary to hold the remaining Goths together. Stilicho was left in charge of the armies with instructions to bring Honorius to the West once Rome was secure. The usurpers were defeated on the River Frigidus, now Hubl or Wippach, on September 3-4 394, when Arbogastes killed himself and Eugenius was executed. Theodosius did not return to the East, but sent back his victorious Goths.

Alaric was not chosen to lead the contingent that participated in the Italian campaign. Their commander was Gainas under a Roman Timasius, with an Alan named Saul and some Huns from Thrace who served under their chief.²³ In 391 Alaric was in revolt, and was captured and pardoned by Stilicho under some unpreserved agreement which soon failed. Alaric found support from the Goths in Thrace and Macedonia. Some had been settled in Phrygia in Asia Minor and were depressed to the level of miners, peasants and tax-payers, and had some motive for discontent. When Alaric again rebelled, he could not reach Constantinople, but made for Athens and occupied the port of Piraeus by which the city was supplied. The

Athenians received him with a small party, feasted him and gave him 'presents'. Although the barbarians entered unwall'd places for food and loot, at other cities they found it more expedient to demand what they wanted and leave them to recover. Alaric attempted to enter the Peloponnese, but withdrew to occupy places in Epirus on the Adriatic, where he was distant from Arcadius and Rufinus, but might either prevent a landing from Italy or pass there if the time were right. His purpose was to obtain pay for his men and recognition for himself. These he had once obtained from Stilicho with Theodosius' consent: he had little to expect from Rufinus and Arcadius, who had Gainas on hand.

Theodosius died in January 395. His best-known action after his return to the West is his edict that Christianity should be the sole lawful religion of all his subjects. It was issued at the behest of Bishop Ambrose of Milan (340-397), himself a former prefect and civil administrator. Gratian had gone so far as to renounce the title of Pontifex Maximus, but his attempt to abolish the veneration of Victory by the senate soon failed. Many old families were imbued with classical mythology as the central part of their education and regarded Christianity as a religion for the poor and ignorant. Zosimus, himself not a Christian, says that Theodosius addressed the senators, exhorting them to abandon the old gods, using the argument that the state could no longer afford the traditional rituals because of the needs of the army.²⁴

Theodosius' victory was evoked by the poet Claudian, an Egyptian master of Latin prosody and of classical mythology who recited his first long eulogy for the consuls of 394 and disappears suddenly in 404. His panegyrics are sickeningly fulsome, but so contemporary as to form useful documents. They were composed to be recited before a pagan-educated court. In the first poem, Theodosius appears as a retired Mars reclining under a tree and crowned with flowers. Stilicho is not named. When the emperor died, Claudian became the publicity manager for Serena and Stilicho. He hints at a secret interview in which Theodosius confided both Parts to Stilicho, though Ambrose says that no change was made in his dispositions. There is nothing to show that Rufinus was displaced, or that Arcadius' seniority was either disputed or acknowledged. The Roman senate certainly regarded itself as senior to that of Byzantium, which rarely claimed parity with it.

The date of Alaric's second revolt appears to be 395, after the return of Gainas and the death of Theodosius. It suited Rufinus to have him at a distance, though he was not prepared to trust Gainas, whose ample reward was payable in the East for successes won in the West. He arranged the marriage of Arcadius to Eudoxia in April 395, she then being an orphan. It was clear that Rufinus did not intend to submit to Stilicho's claim to oversee both Parts. In November 395, Rufinus was assassinated by Gainas, not without the complicity of Stilicho. However, Arcadius then appointed his chamberlain Eusebius to be his chief minister. In his two long 'books' against Rufinus, Claudian begins by asserting that Rufinus' end disproves the idea that wickedness can prevail and shows that a golden age is about to open under two emperors with a single force at their disposal. The soul of great-hearted Stilicho alone took arms against the monster of corruption. Rufinus had stirred up the Getae and the hideous Huns: he started wars which Stilicho won. Stilicho claims both hemispheres and would brook no equal, etc, etc. But if Stilicho hoped that the death of Rufinus would settle things, he soon found that Eusebius was no improvement, and had the advantage of being appointed by the emperor Arcadius, who was now married. Stilicho could not intervene against the East

without the support of Arcadius, since war between the two brothers was unthinkable to the senators. Olympiodorus says that Stilicho recommended that Alaric be made a Roman general to occupy Illyricum, still divided, with Jovinus as pretorian prefect there. He adds that Alaric quitted Dalmatia and Pannonia and led his men to Epirus, where he waited a long time and returned to Italy having achieved nothing.²⁵ The fragments of Olympiodorus do not always concur with the later testimony of Zosimus: both wrote in the East. Despite his absurd rhetoric, Claudian is unlikely to have distorted facts for recital before Honorius and Stilicho and an increasingly sceptical court. In denouncing Rufinus he makes the minister admit in terror to Arcadius that Stilicho governed both Parts. In the first book against Eutropius he leans heavily on the fact that the chamberlain was a eunuch and indulges in more or less obscene innuendoes on the monster's sexlessness, urging his patron to struggle with the horrible creature.²⁶

The second book against Eutropius declares that Mars summoned Stilicho to war, in which the hero was brilliant and victorious, but he was also forbearing. A diversion was caused in Africa. If Stilicho could not now openly defy Arcadius, there was still the fact that the East occupied Pannonia and part of Illyricum lent to the East by Gratian, and that Africa, on which Rome depended for food, belonged to the East.²⁷ The coming of Africa was Gildo, and Stilicho set himself the task of removing him without disturbing the senate by recourse to war. He undermined Gildo by inciting his brother to rebel. This succeeded in July 398, when the brother was invited to Rome and quietly disappeared. Eutropius could not count on Alaric and did not come out in support of Gildo. The result satisfied the senate, and Claudian left his poem *De Bello Gildonico* unfinished.

Claudian sang the third and fourth consulships of Honorius in 396 and 398, and also the marriage of Honorius to Maria, the elder daughter of Stilicho and Serena, at Milan in February 398. The attempts to endow Stilicho with a military career are related to the fact that he came of an obscure Vandal father and needed to be justified to senatorial snobbery. The success over Gildo enabled him to seal his relationship with the imperial family and was certainly approved by Serena, mother-in-law of her son by adoption: her own son Eucherius thus entered the line of succession. In his Epithalamium for the wedding, Claudian makes the boy-bridegroom of fourteen the impassioned wooer and prays that her little sister, Thermantia, may make as good a match (she did when Maria died) and the boy Eucherius surpass even his father Stilicho. Eucherius was then ten but by 400 Claudian implies that, riding with the down of early manhood on his cheek, he will marry Galla Placidia: Thermantia smiles as he lifts the veil from the modest maiden's face. The poems on Honorius' consulates are little more than notes for Stilicho's heroic biography, making Hebrus run with streams of Gothic blood while Honorius is the young lion learning from him.

In 399 Arcadius made his chamberlain consul and Stilicho refused to recognize the apotheosis of the monster. He now relied on Gainas, who was so well rewarded that Tribigild rebelled, backed by the poor Goths settled in Phrygia. Gainas was made magister to put down the rebels and demanded the sole command, with the cession of notables as hostages to secure himself. They were at last granted, but only after Eutropius had been killed in the autumn of 399, in time for Honorius to make Stilicho consul for 400. Arcadius then awarded the Eastern consulship to Fravitta, who had been a barbarian but was now thoroughly

Romanized with a Greek wife. The demand of Gainas for hostages was met but they were killed in July. Fravitta did not escape accusations of treachery for allowing Gainas to escape alive. It was finally a Hun who killed Gainas and brought his head to Arcadius, who in April 401 appointed Cesarius as his minister and awarded the military command to Fravitta. Here Olympidorus breaks off and Zosimus is silent, leaving Alaric awaiting orders from Stilicho.

Claudian wrote three panegyrics on Stilicho's consulate in 400. He then composed his Gothic War and his last panegyric on Honorius' sixth consulate in 404. Arcadius and Cesarius followed a policy of collaboration with the West until Cesarius was removed in 402 or 403, when Fravitta was executed, a victim of the rising tide of opposition to all barbarians in the East and the demand for their exclusion from the imperial family and the high command. In these years Alaric could not look to the East for recognition: he had once been pardoned by Stilicho, from whom alone he might expect to be paid. From Emona, later Laibach and now Ljubljana, in the disputed part of Illyricum, he might receive recruits from the north or from the east. In 401 he was still unrewarded and entered Italy by way of Aquileia. He did battle with the Romans at Pollentia and Verona. Claudian probably composed his penultimate poem on the Gothic war in 403. It ends with Stilicho's victory at Pollentia in July 402 (?) and does not mention the second clash at Verona. However, he refers to Alaric's invasion through Raetia, the Italian Alps, and Stilicho's journey in the depths of winter by a lake (Garda?) and the snow-clad Alps. Amidst unimaginable privations, he heartened the fields of Vindelicia and Noricum and called in the legions from Britain and Italy and many Germans. Alaric, concealing his fear, addresses the long-haired, skin-clad elders, who warn him not to press his luck. He replies that the Goths have overrun many lands, now hold Illyricum and have only Rome left to take. He reaches Pollentia, not far from Aquileia, where Stilicho harangues his forces. He gives battle. When the Alan leader dies a glorious death in a wild charge, Stilicho throws in the Roman legions and faces Alaric with total ruin. The glory of Pollentia shall live forever. The graveyard of the Goths, it would teach presumptuous peoples never to scorn Rome. There is no description of any victory in the frozen north after the hazardous winter journey. Alaric was able to use the route opened by the Roman usurpers Magnus Maximus and Arbogastes, and the engagement took place on Italian soil.

The last panegyric, for the sixth consulate of Honorius, was recited in Rome in the presence of the plump young emperor, who did not leave the shelter of the marshes of Ravenna between December 402 and February 404. After a suitable invocation on the restoration of Rome's grandeur, Claudian mentions that he had already sung Stilicho's war against the Goths. Alaric's hopes had been dashed and destroyed by the bloody victory of Pollentia, but his life had been spared for political reasons.²⁸ Though humbled, he had come back and was defeated at Verona between the Raetian Alps and the River Po, which added not a little to the Roman success.²⁹

Stilicho was incapable of pursuing Alaric and as in the past bought him off with promises he could not keep. The need for this explains the exaggerated account of Stilicho's military ability and of Rome's wonder at his superhuman efforts on her behalf. The bubble was soon to burst, for in 404 it was learnt that another Gothic leader, the Ostrogothic king Radagaisus, was assembling a vast horde of various races for an invasion of Italy. It took place in the spring of 405, when Stilicho gathered some thirty units from all quarters. Lacking the Roman discipline

of Alaric, Radagaesus was unable to prevent his men from reaching the cities of the north and breaking up in quest of food and loot. His own band was defeated at Fiesole near Florence, where he was captured and executed in August 405. Alaric had remained at Emona or at Viranum, now Klagenfurt in Austria. He abided by the agreement made with Stilicho, but was well situated both to obtain new recruits and to enrol those of Radagaesus, some of whom were enlisted by Stilicho's generals: the Goths were ready to command and to be followed by any who would take orders from them.³⁰ If Stilicho had awarded Alaric the title of magister, he was unable to pay him.

Any hope of reuniting the two Parts was abandoned, at least while Arcadius lived. His position had been strengthened since April 10 401, when Eudoxia presented him with an heir, the future Theodosius II.³¹ He was placed under the tutorship of Anthemius, a respected orthodox Christian who opposed the entry of barbarians into the Eastern establishment without embarking on hazardous attempts to overtake the past.

Stilicho, if he heartened Vindelicia, the territory of the Vandals, had singularly little impact on his father's people, peasants, left with the West when Gratian divided the Pannonias. They had kings of their own and were infantry, but were at least familiar with the mounted Alans, who served the Pannonian emperors. Their neighbours were now the Quads, a branch of the Sueves which had migrated under their own king towards western Pannonia, now Hungary, where they had brought the reign of Valentinian I to an apoplectic end. From this point, the Vandals begin their thrust westward, precipitated by the strain of the meagre resources of the region and lack of cultivation resulting from the invasion of Radagaesus.

The poet Claudian ceases to be heard.³² His classical mythology faded as the Eastern court sought a reconciliation on more Christian terms, and his rhetoric, however brilliant, was mere posturing. Serena herself, perhaps as much as anyone, was inclined towards her imperial family and its future.

The fact that Stilicho had withdrawn the Roman legions from the western Rhineland was no secret. In the poem on the Gothic war, Claudian says that the legions facing the fair-haired Sygambri and those who tamed the Chatti and wild Cherusci had left the Rhine safe, defended only by the terror of Rome's name: would posterity believe such a thing? Germania, once the home of peoples so fierce that previous emperors could hardly hold them down, now so placidly responded to Stilicho's rein that she neither attempted to invade places exposed by the withdrawal of the garrisons nor crossed the stream, fearing to approach the unguarded bank.³³ The legions had gone, leaving the Franks to defend the territory unaided. With the approach of winter the Vandals moved westward, guided by Alans who knew the way through the territories of the Alamanni to the middle Rhine, where corn from the Britains was stored in fortified granaries near the frontier. There was heavy fighting and both Vandals and Alans lost leaders, some Alans deserting, before they crossed into the Gauls taking some Sueves with them. This is placed conventionally on the last day of 406, the River Rhine being frozen. They could not all have crossed in a day. There were bridges at Mainz and Cologne as well as barges and ships. They entered and sacked Trier and other places in Belgica, reaching Taroanna, Théroutanne, near St Omer, barely forty miles from Boulogne. The news alarmed

the Britains, where the cities were informed that they must look to their own defence. The capital city was London, once the seat of the elder Theodosius, and the corn from the well-tilled fields on the east side was exported to the mouth of the Rhine, held by well-disposed Salian Franks. There were usurpers, Marcus and Gratian, the second a civilian. They soon failed, but after four months the 'Celtic legions' produced a leader named Constantine (III) Orosius says that he was *ex infima militia*, which Seeck renders 'ein gemeine Soldat', and Bury 'a private'. He was no Napoleon risen from the ranks, but a mature officer with a son named Constans who had been a monk and a younger son, Julian. He had no difficulty in mustering an army, probably of at least four legions including some Franks serving in the Britains, or in organizing the crossing to Boulogne and in seizing Trier early in 407, when the two Vandal kings and the surviving Alans made for the south-west, having learned of the riches of Aquitania, even if they had not read the poems of Ausonius.

Constantine III probably had no cavalry, and, having staunched the open wound of Trier, proceeded down the Rhone to Arles, to which Honorius' civil and military authorities had fled. There he was welcomed by Apollinaris, the leading Gallo-Roman landowner and senator, whom he made his pretorian prefect. Arles was destined to play some part in the history of the Goths. In Roman eyes Provence, the first extension beyond Italy, was scarcely part of the Gauls. The Rhone was the main artery for the transport of men and goods to the great province of Lugdunum, Caesar's Celtic Gaul, which took up all central France, and was divided into four Lugdunenses. Arles, favoured by Constantine I, was an important city at the gateway to the more Romanized Gallia togata, where Roman dress prevailed. To its west was Aquitania, divided into Aquitania I, with its capital at Bourges, and II, with its capital at Toulouse and its main trading centre and university at Bordeaux, near the mouth of the Garonne. The north was Belgica, or Germania, long-haired or *crinita*, also sub-divided. The Alans with their horses, moved faster and further than the Vandals, though their wagons carrying their dependants lagged behind.

Constantine III recalled the first Christian emperor with his British mother: his sons' names were also chosen to reflect the association with the imperial house. The rapid success of the British Christian divided opinion in Ravenna: the officials and generals from Trier and Arles fled to Ticinum, Pavia, on the Po, in something of a panic. He was assuredly a usurper, but no one else could now control the vast western prefecture. Since the Spains were administered by a vicarius of the Gaulish pretorian prefect, Constantine and Apollinaris found no difficulty in obtaining recognition, at least in Tarraconensis: the Theodosian family, Honorius' cousins, were great landowners in Gallaecia and Lusitania.³⁴

The only opposition came from a band of Goths led by Sarus, an enemy of Alaric, who crossed the Alps and killed by treachery Constantine's commanders at Vienne. They were at once replaced by Gerontius, a Briton, and Edobich, a Frank, who obliged Sarus and his band of 300 men to return across the Alps, losing his baggage on the way to *bagaudae*, rebellious peasants. The defeat was not vital, but made Stilicho's position in the face of Alaric even weaker, since he was cut off from obtaining recruits from either the north or the east.

The emperor Honorius, on whom the fortunes of Serena and Stilicho depended, was left a widower on the death of their daughter, Maria, and in 408 was married to her sister

Thermantia, a child. No heir could be born for some years, so that the prospects of their son Eucherius improved, giving cause for gossip that they intended to make him emperor.

However, the prospect altered on May 1 408, when Arcadius died and was succeeded by Theodosius II, aged seven, and placed in the charge of Eudoxia and the patrician Anthemius. Serena and Stilicho thought of intervening, but could do so only with the presence of Honorius. Anthemius sent Olympius, a Scythian Greek, to represent him at the court of Ravenna. For this purpose, it was thought expedient to have Honorius harangue the troops quartered at Pavia. The discredited officials from Gaul were there, together with the defeated Sarus. Stilicho remained at Bologna. Suddenly there was a revolt among the troops, who ran amok and killed the leading fugitives from the Gauls and many others. It was at first rumoured that Honorius was a captive, and Stilicho prepared to rescue him, but when it was learned that the emperor was alive and in the hands of generals who had shammed sickness in hospital, Stilicho sought refuge in a church in Ravenna. He was extracted under promise of his life and promptly executed by Heraclian on August 23–24 408. Heraclian was rewarded by being made *comes* of Africa, and Honorius's chamberlains set out to seek Eucherius, who had escaped to Rome: Serena was strangled under suspicion that she would favour Alaric.

Although Olympius emerged from Ravenna with the guard of Huns, he was unable to cut the Gothic line of communication between Alaric and the Ostrogothic king Ataulf. He reported a victory which was soon seen to be Claudianesque. As winter approached, Honorius was declared consul for the eighth time and Theodosius II for the third, for 409. Zosimus gives this as the time when Constantine III sent a mission of priests or eunuchs to Ravenna to ask for recognition as co-emperor. This was granted. A unique inscription in Greek from Trier commemorates the daughter of a *comes* Addau who died during the dual hypatia of Honorius and Constantine in July 409. Nothing more is known of her father, a Greek. Trier had only lately been sacked by the western barbarians, but the church in its aristocratic suburb was available, at least for funerals.

Alaric had pushed his way to Rome and camped outside the city. His demands were for recognition, arrears of pay and victuals. The number and dates of his missions to Ravenna and of those of the beleaguered city are not clear. He was able to obtain recruits from Ataulf in the north, and his numbers were swollen by deserters and runaway slaves, whom he readily received. If they were recaptured, their lives were forfeit. They also required supplies. Alaric responded by occupying the port and so threatening Rome's food, a device he had employed at Athens. His camp outside Rome was occupied in September or October, when the onset of winter most threatened the city's reserves.

At Ravenna, Olympius was Master of the Offices and busied himself by dismissing those appointed by Stilicho. Jovius, the former prefect of Illyricum, was made chief minister in the belief that he would best know how to handle Alaric. He was given the title of patrician, to match the rank of Anthemius in the East. Olympius' sally with the Huns destroyed his chances as a military commander, and he withdrew or fled to Illyricum.

There seemed ample reason to recognize Constantine III as co-emperor. It gave him the right to recruit troops, to collect taxes and to issue coin, which he did at Trier and Lyon, the latter with

his claim to be *restitutor* of the empire. It became a centre for his army, doubtless to the relief of Apollinaris and the people of Arles, where he had the seat of his government. To the Spains he sent his son Constans as his Caesar to appoint officials in Tarraconensis, facilitated by Apollinaris and the close relations between the landowners of southern Gaul and those beyond the Pyrenees.³⁵ Beyond the newer province and the untamed Vascones, Constans found that the family of Theodosius had mobilized their guards and peasants and formed a private army to resist him. Constantine sent his general Gerontius with British or Frankish troops to oppose them. He had already disposed men to block the Alpine passes after the attempted invasion by Sarus. It appears that the British had little difficulty in coping with the improvised army and arrested and killed two of the Theodosians with their wives. Two others escaped to Italy and Constantinople to tell their story. It is not clear when the western barbarians crossed the Pyrenees into the Spains, apparently taking the westernmost route through the land of the Vascones. They are said to have spent two years on the rampage in the Gauls, having overrun Aquitania II, this would give a date in 409. The Aquitanians and Apollinaris were certainly glad to be rid of them. Constantine was still at the height of his power in Arles when he despatched a second mission to Ravenna. His representative was now his north Gaulish minister Jovinus, who optimistically offered to bring all the resources of the western prefecture, the Britains, Gauls and Spains, over to Honorius. Jovinus returned to make good his offer. He had befriended Allobich, the commander. If the Theodosians had already been executed, Jovinus took care to know nothing about it. Constantine himself then prepared a mission which he himself would lead.³⁶ He was clearly not prepared for a campaign, but relied on the understanding reached with Allobich, whose plans were opposed by the chamberlain Eusebius. They fell out and Allobich killed Eusebius. In revenge, Allobich himself was assassinated while leading a procession in front of the emperor, who according to Sozomen dismounted and gave thanks for his delivery from a traitor. The news reached Constantine III as he and his party reached Liburnum in Liguria, before crossing the Po. He at once turned back to Arles.³⁷

The retreat was close to a defeat. In September 409, the appointment of Claudius Posthumus Dardanus as pretorian prefect for the Gauls was made at Ravenna. Dardanus had a long career as governor of Vienne and quaestor and was both a ruthless enemy of usurpers and a zealous Christian. He founded his Theopolis or city of God at Sisteron in the French Alps, and corresponded with St Augustine, who addressed him as beloved and with Jerome on a point of theology, who was equally cordial. This had the effect of destroying the government of Constantine III. Apollinaris was prepared to accept the co-emperorship with Honorius, but not to oppose a ruling of the legitimate emperor. Jovinus, the northern Gaulish minister, was for resisting. Possibly Apollinaris was disappointed with the military performance of Constantine when he resigned. The general Gerontius seems to have agreed. He had been sent to the Spains to support the former monk Constans, now declared Augustus, a promotion Honorius would not have accepted. He returned to Gaul to Vienne, once governed by Dardanus, where he had a house. There he proclaimed his *domesticus*, probably his son Maximus, as emperor in defiance of Constantine. He attempted to take Arles but failed.³⁸

With Alaric camped outside the city, the state of Rome was almost as chaotic. For a time in 409 the patrician Jovius had been disposed to remove Honorius, though not to disqualify him by maiming, for which the cutting off of a hand or even a finger would suffice. Alaric retorted by proclaiming Attalus Priscus, prefect of Rome's food supplies and one of the negotiators

who at once made him *magister* and Ataulf, now his brother-in-law, *domesticus* and commander of his guard. Alaric's claim for arrears of pay amounted to four or five thousand pounds weight of gold, with hostages as a guarantee, young notables including Jovius' son. Honorius was willing to permit senators to tax themselves for the payment, but not to permit distinguished Romans to become hostages to buy off barbarians. The negotiations took place at Ariminum, Rimini, some way to the south of Ravenna, and the Romans included Innocent I, bishop of Rome. Jovius waited in Alaric's tent while Honorius was consulted and messengers came back with the reply. At length, Alaric offered to depose Attalus by removing his insignia and returning them to Honorius. When this was rejected, Jovius protected himself from charges of treason by having Honorius and his ministers take solemn oaths never to deal with Alaric or his kin. Faced with this refusal, Alaric ordered his men to sack the city, the only reward he could offer. It took place in August 410.³⁹

For a short time, late in 409, Honorius' plight seemed desperate, and he was reported about to flee to the East. But the port of Ravenna remained open. Alaric was himself blockaded. The Goths had no navy and no skill in navigation. At the height of his shadow of power, Attalus had addressed the senators in Rome in a speech full of bravado, promising to restore Rome's greatness and to recover Africa for her. It was what the senators wanted to hear, and he was held in respect there if nowhere else. Alaric offered to send five hundred men under a Gothic leader to take Africa for him, but Attalus knew that a violent attack by barbarians would be fatal to himself: a Roman province must not be recovered by Goths. Attalus insisted in sending a weak force under a Roman, hoping to persuade or bribe Heraclian, the executioner of Stilicho. There was a long and anxious interval, during which Alaric attempted to reduce other Roman cities, without any success: no other place of any consequence fell to him. Late in 409 Honorius' fortunes improved, when the East not only sent ships to strengthen the blockade of the ports, but reinforced the guard of Huns and provided gold. Heraclian was stiffened, and if Attalus expected to bribe him he was outbidden. The news came that Attalus' expedition had failed. The sack of Rome was Alaric's last card. It satisfied his men for the moment, but left him without resources. He headed towards the south, hoping to capture a port and reach one of the islands. He died shortly after and was buried in the river at Cosenza. His grand design had failed. He was still unpaid, unrecognized and without land of his own. He had destroyed the ancient glory of the city, kept his army intact and still had some Roman adherents, including Attalus and his son, whose return would have been fatal to them.

Alaric's successor was his brother-in-law Ataulf. In Ravenna, it was seen that the Goths could not succeed, even if they could not be vanquished until an effective Roman commander was found. Ravenna itself was secured, and was shielded by Alaric's enemy Sarus, who governed Picenum on the Adriatic with his small but seasoned band. The Roman whom Dardanus desired to find was Constantius, a soldier of no special distinction, but of strong ambitions and much shrewdness. He was sent to deal with the remaining usurpers and given part of the reinforced Hunnic guard. He marched on Arles, where Constantine's government dissolved, being followed by Jovinus and the north Gaulish troops, who were ready to proclaim him. Constantine had little alternative but to enter the church and seek sanctuary as a priest, opening the gates of Arles to Constantius. It was not a very glorious victory, but it must have seemed so to Honorius and it opened the course of honours to Constantius. Constantine III and his younger son were sent in chains to Ravenna, but were butchered on

entering Italy, lest they appeal to Honorius, who had once recognized him as co-emperor and had escaped a similar fate by a hair's breadth. The heads were exhibited at Ravenna in September 411.⁴⁰

Dardanus would have liked to finish the usurpers by dealing with Jovinus who had proclaimed himself with his brother Sebastian as his *domesticus*, but a new and more urgent crisis arose. Heraclian, who had been made *comes* of Africa and thought himself, with the backing of the East, more entitled to glory than the upstart Constantius, assembled a large fleet with his son-in-law Sabinus, and invaded Italy, where he was soon defeated. Sabinus fled to the East and Heraclian was assassinated at Carthage. Constantius, who had organized the resistance, was awarded all his possessions and made consul for 414.⁴¹

Ataulf and the Gothic army had had to find a new policy in 410. It was to turn again to Ravenna. He had one valuable card which Alaric, who had attempted to depose Honorius, could not play. He had captured Theodosius I's youngest child Galla Placidia, who was brought up at Rome. She was now a young woman of about twenty, with a retinue of her own, which with those of Attalus, formed a party, not at the moment large, but since Eucherius with whom Claudian had matched her was dead, and Honorius had no issue, might well in time prove valuable. The Gothic bishop and historian Jordanes, writing in c. 550, says that Ataulf married Galla Placidia at Forum Livii, now Forlì on the Emilian Way, which crosses Italy. No other writer says this, and Jordanes' work is a compound of recorded history and Gothic legend. Even if it were so, Honorius and his Christian chamberlains would not have accepted a wedding by the Arian rite. Nevertheless, the place is where Ataulf probably was.

There is no doubt that the glory of Rome had been smirched and that much of the population suffered dreadful privations. The news seemed so portentous that it amazed later generations and continues to amaze historians. The lack of bread affected all classes, especially those who could not afford cake. The belief that the population was reduced to cannibalism became a commonplace, picked up by Hydatius, who, unlike Orosius and Salvian, thought the barbarians in Spain had also reduced the Hispano-Romans to a similar state. It may arise from the anecdote that at the circus someone cried 'Why don't they apply the price control to human flesh?', or the equivalent, a sample of Roman sardonic wit: it seems not to have stopped the horses, which were also edible, from running. It is a fair speculation that the Goths were induced to leave Italy for Gaul by a promise, to be broken later.

4

THE VISIGOTHS IN AQUITANIA

Ataulf's westward march in 412 is not chronicled. The idea that it was the vast migration of a whole people cannot now be sustained. It was, at most, part of the Goths that formed a division of the Roman army. The number of dependents was limited by the tents and wagons available. It had no siege equipment and could not enter Marseille, defended by the young *comes* Bonifatius. No major field engagement is recorded, nor was it to be expected since Honorius was glad to see the Goths out of Italy.⁴² Dardanus may well have ignored the oath taken by Honorius to have no dealings with Alaric or his kin. On reaching Narbonne Ataulf offered to bring him the heads of Jovinus and Sebastian. He killed Sebastian and sent Jovinus to Dardanus, who executed him at Narbonne in July 413: the heads were exhibited at Ravenna on August 30. The Goths were camped in the vicinity, but the port was blockaded to prevent them from reaching Africa. Ataulf now thought himself the champion of Honorius, and in January 414 married Galla Placidia with full Roman rites and Attalus singing the epithalamium. The marriage brought him into the imperial family and produced two children, one of them a boy, named Theodosius not Alaric. Apart from Attalus, Placidia's retinue included a general Candidianus and another who became a monk and carried the story to Jerome in Palestine, where he was known as the *ex-duce* Domnus. Orosius heard him tell his story, which was that Ataulf had renounced the idea of replacing Romania with Gothia since the Goths would not obey (written) law and had undergone a remarkable change under the influence of Placidia. This was very special pleading. It sufficed to convince St Jerome that the Goths were not intrinsically evil, but were a divine scourge sent to chastise Roman wickedness. This view became the kernel of Orosius' *Seven Books against the Pagans*, which examines the whole course of Roman history to prove the thesis. It was finished in 416-417, and was pressed even further by the monk Salvian, a refugee from Trier, who wrote in the monastery of Lerins near Cannes.⁴³

Ataulf's stay outside Narbonne, however important to the Goths, was soon curtailed for lack of food and land for his people, who were still living off what they could find. Constantius, now well launched on the way to become consul more than once, an honour rarely bestowed on commoners, had the voice in affairs at Ravenna, rather than Dardanus. He was awarded the task of recovering Placidia with the title of patrician and the promise of her hand. Ataulf moved on from Narbonne to Barcelona and camped outside the city, where the death of the infant Theodosius put an end to his imperial illusions. He was murdered by, or on behalf of,

one Sigeric, a brother of Sarus, whose own reign was of the briefest. Two weeks later he was in turn removed by the senior *dux* Wallia.

Lost Roman documents are now rare. The most significant is Honorius' Letter of Rewards, discovered in a medieval copy and published in 1945 by J. M. Lacarra.⁴⁴

Although undated, it can be placed in May 416, when Honorius came to Rome for his triumph at which sundry usurpers were paraded.⁴⁵ The Letter begins by stating that Constantius was 'erede' as patrician to one Sabinian⁴⁶. In the fourth century, the emperor's father-in-law was distinguished as patrician and entitled to wear a shorter version of the imperial robe. Anthemius was regent for the East and called patrician to Theodosius II, as Jovius for Honorius. O. Seeck in *Regesten* (1927) translates it as 'Excellenz', and omits Jovius, Sabinian and Felix. There was then only one for each Part, but the West refused to accept Olympius and later Felix, appointed from the East.⁴⁷

Constantius returned to Arles in 414 to attempt to recover Placidia. The condition that Honorius was pledged never to recognize the kin of Alaric was annulled by the murder of Ataulf near Barcelona in July 415. If Sigeric was a personal enemy of Alaric, Wallia was a Visigothic nationalist prepared to renounce the claim to enter the imperial family in order to obtain food and land. An agreement was made at the Clausuras, the easternmost Pyrenees, to return Placidia in exchange for a supply of corn and the promise of land after Wallia had crushed the Western barbarians. The agreement assured Constantius of the princess' hand and the award of his second consulship for 417. The negotiations were conducted by one Euplутius on his behalf and the bargain was verbal, but it would be surprising if Wallia did not secure the promise of a specific territory, which turned out to be Aquitania II, with the cities of Toulouse and Bordeaux, remote from the Mediterranean and Africa, but with a great commercial port. Placidia was reluctant to accept the terms, but yielded and the match produced a daughter, Justa Grata Honoria, and a son, the future Valentinian III, born on July 2 419. As Sidonius remarks, Constantius *omnia praestat*. He was made Augustus and co-emperor in February 421, but died of pleurisy in September.

Wallia for his part set out to fulfil his undertaking. The western barbarians had crossed the Pyrenees after two years in the Gauls in September or October 409.⁴⁸ The two dates suggest that they did not all cross at once. Hydatius' annals are the only source for the history of the Suevic kingdom until 469, when he must have died. However, he was not an eye-witness of the arrival of the western invaders. The only recorder of their appearance was Orosius, then a priest probably of Braga. Since the martyrdom of Priscillian, the people of Gallaecia had hailed him as their own. The council of Saragossa had failed to stamp out his beliefs, and the Priscillianist bishops claimed that they were obedient and orthodox. The first Council of Toledo in 400 had broken up in some confusion, and the bishop of Rome – Innocent I – declared the Spains to be in a state of schism. Braga was the seat of Roman orthodoxy, and Orosius was set the task of persuading the Priscillianist clergy of the error of their ways without recourse to force.

He saw the coming of the strange and heathen barbarians who presented a political problem outside his own capacity, and escaped in a mist by sea, pursued to the water's edge with clubs

and stones, to seek the guidance of St Augustine at Hippo, who sent him on to St Jerome in Palestine. His escape is dated 413, and was probably from Oporto, the closest port to Braga, or Tuy on the Minho. He does not say which “strange barbarians” he saw. He was already in Palestine when he heard the monk and *ex-duce* Domnus tell the story of the change in Ataulf’s behaviour attributed to his marriage.

The barbarians were the Hasdingian Vandals, who were allocated territory in Gallaecia under their King Gundered. The Silingian Vandals (who have left their name in Silesia between East Germany and Poland) were placed in Baetica; the Alans were assigned to Lusitania and Cartaginensis; and the Sueves placed in the far west near the Ocean. These last were the only ones to remain in the territories assigned to them, the districts of Braga and Oporto in northern Portugal. Hydatius says that they had been marauding for two years when the allocation took place, therefore in 411. It had the approval of some local authorities, but not that of Ravenna. This does not explain how they came to cross the Pyrenees in the first place. Constantine III had not enough troops to occupy south-western Gaul, though his prefect Apollinaris was anxious to see his country free of them. It is probable that they were told of the *agger* on the middle Douro set aside to maintain the old Seventh Legion in Leon, and that the Hasdingians hoped to settle there, since Leon had its own peasantry. The Alans were mounted scouts, though their dependents in wagons lingered behind: they were less numerous and more accustomed to Roman service, but could not have occupied the whole of the two vast provinces assigned to them. The Silingians in Baetica represented the most serious threat to Rome by its proximity to Africa. It remains uncertain whether the Sueves were from the Rhineland or were Quads from the edge of Pannonia, or both.⁴⁹

If Wallia started from Barcelona his main object was to clear Baetica. The Silingian king Fredbal was captured by a trick and sent to Honorius. In 417 Wallia had slaughtered so many Silingians that the survivors joined the Hasdingians in the north, and Gundered became ‘king of the Vandals and the Alans’. The Mediterranean coast had been cleared and Wallia returned to claim his reward in the promised land, Aquitania. Constantius was anxious to be sure of his prize, entry into the imperial family. He had not exposed himself unduly, and was in good standing at Ravenna. Wallia may have consumed the large quantity of corn he had been given, and the united Vandals were much more formidable than the kings he had defeated. Orosius says that he turned back at the Straits. The Romans did not want him to stay in the Spains.

Constantius had broken an important Roman law, that no barbarians should settle on Roman soil without abandoning their independent kings and customs. Theodosius I had been spared from infringing ancient practice when King Athanaric died at Constantinople. A law of 398 agreed by Rome and Constantinople laid down that when defenders were required to protect Roman citizens, the guests might claim one-third of their hosts’ property. It might take some time to ensure that barbarians adopted Roman customs, so that the essential thing was that they renounce their own kings. The situation in Toulouse was confused, but Constantius was in a strong position so long as he stayed close to Honorius. There is much speculation about how the settlement was made at Toulouse. It was more formal than the unofficial concessions made to the Vandals and Sueves. King Wallia died soon after reaching Toulouse, and his crown passed to Theodoric I (418/9-451), whose long reign served to fix relations

between Goths and Romans and to assure the succession in an age when the Theodosian dynasty was foundering.

A glimpse of the settlement at Bordeaux is provided by Paulinus of Pella, the wealthy and idle heir to a former governor of Macedonia, in his verse autobiography *Eucharisticus* (the Thanksgiving). It was written in c. 459, when he was old and impoverished. His family estate was at Vasatis, Bazas, and his impressions are clear even if his chronology is not. He had been made treasurer by Attalus, who had no treasure. When the Goths occupied Bordeaux, he and his wife went to Bazas. Their land was plundered, not by Goths but by young neighbours and stewards. He went to Bordeaux to complain to the king: he does not say which. But the Goth did not want to know Attalus' associates. While Goths and Romans were negotiating, the walls were unmanned, but ringed by Alan wagons laden with their dependents.⁵⁰ Other Gallo-Romans were protected by Gothic acquaintances, but he was exposed to charges of collaboration, with no appeal. He thought of going to Macedonia, where his mother had had estates, but his wife did not want to risk the danger of travel. He eventually sold an estate at Marseille to a Goth, and became a devout and orthodox Christian.

Goths were not city-dwellers, and if they made their homes near Toulouse it was so that the king might collect the taxes and dispose of them among his *optimates*. These companions or *comites* were rewarded by their ruler, and they in turn rewarded their dependents. Some Romans abandoned their estates and were replaced by Goths. Other Goths served landowners as guards or *bucellarii*.⁵¹ Gothic discipline was strict, like the Roman on which it was modelled. *Comites* and *duces* settled disputes among their own followers and they alone might lay disputes before the king. The Goths enjoyed freedom of movement, and the wearing of sword-belts placed them in the officer class. The Visigoths remained in Aquitania II for almost a century, and it was not envisaged that they should return to the Spains, unless in small groups as federates.

There remained one former usurper unaccounted for. Maximus, the *domesticus* of Gerontius, the British commander killed at Vienne, had escaped to join the remains of the 'Celtic' legions, who were pardoned for their services to Honorius in 416. They had been placed on the north coast of Gallaecia, near the present episcopal city of Mondoñedo. They were expressly named to be treated as well as other loyal troops in the Spains though they were not part of the Roman army there. They retained for several centuries their identity as the Britones in Gallaecia. One feature of the British Christians was that the abbot of the chief monastery was also bishop of the diocese. The abbey church of the British was the monastery of Maximus, here a proper name, not an adjective.⁵² The ex-emperor and usurper lived modestly, dropping his pretensions and perhaps taking refuge in the church as bishop. Prosper, writing of the years to 433, confirms that Maximus kept his life and lived in humility.⁵³ There is no reason to suppose that the church of Maximus was not named after Maximus, its founder. There is no reference to the Britones having been in the Spains at any earlier date. In the time of St Martin of Dume the bishop of the Britones bore the Celtic name of Malioc, the governor of a still alien community.⁵⁴

Bishop Hydatius was a native of the Limici, who give their name to the River Limia in Spanish, Lima in Portuguese, flowing into the Ocean at Viana do Castelo. He was taken to the east to

be educated and knew Jerome and other Christian divines. He does not say when he returned to the west, probably before 420, since he says that he cannot find the date of the death of Jerome. His task was to resume that of convincing the Priscillianists, still numerous in the north-west. Hydatius says that he was consecrated bishop in 424, when his annals were probably begun: he does not say of where, but his annals say 'of Gallaecia'. His seat was at Aquae Flaviae, now Chaves, not previously a diocese, but the Suevic kings made their hall at Dume outside Braga, on the site of one or more Roman villae. The Sueves were too close for comfort to Braga, and still heathen. As well as opposing Priscillianism, Hydatius had the task of representing the Gallaeco-Romans in their dealings with them.⁵⁵ He was the historian of the kingdom of the Sueves until 469.

Hydatius gives the date for the first settlement of the western barbarians as 411, after two years of dreadful famine, with cannibalism and women eating their own babes. He notes the fame of St Augustine and his success in dealing with the Donatists of Africa. For the division he uses the term *sortes, ad habitandum*, which might suggest that they drew lots as between the Sueves and others, or simply that the land was awarded for settlement, adding that the Hispani who had suffered so much but had survived in the cities and fortified towns, resigned themselves. He records the murder of Ataulf near Barcelona and the succession of Wallia in 416, when Fredbal the Silingian king was captured and sent to Honorius, and his own *conversio*. Under 418, he records the eclipse of the sun on *14 kal Aug*, and Wallia's extinction of the Silingians in Baetica. He does not mention that at Ravenna it was decided to create a Council of Seven Provinces of southern Gaul, which in any case could not meet because of the troubles of the times, and when it did so, appears only intermittently. Hermeric, king of the Sueves, is named in 419, when the much increased Hasdingian Vandals of King Gundred began to clash with the Sueves in the Narbasian Mountains, either the Montes de León or the 'serras' of Bragança. Pressed by the vicarius named Maurocellus, the *comes* of the Spains, Asterius, made them desist from the blockade of the Sueves. They killed some as they moved southwards through Braga, towards Baetica, leaving Gallaecia. This was as Honorius awarded Constantius his third consulship, making him Augustus in February 421. When he died, military affairs passed to the *magister militum* Castinus, who raised a large army including a contingent of Goths to make war on the Vandals. He almost surrounded them near the Straits and reduced them by starvation, but they broke through when he rashly risked a battle and forced him to retire to Tarragona. He was able to blame the auxiliaries for betraying him. Future experience confirms that the Goths fought best under a king of their own.

When the Emperor Honorius died at Ravenna in February 423, the Western court responded by bestowing the purple on John, the highest civilian minister, who had the support of Castinus and Asterius. The sole legal emperor was Theodosius II, who had not given his consent. He reacted only when Placidia fled with her infant son Valentinian to Thessalonica and appealed to him. He made the boy Caesar and sent an army with Alans to take Italy for him. When it had succeeded, he declared Valentinian III Augustus, with Placidia as regent and an easterner Felix as patrician. Among those loyal to Placidia was the *comes* Bonifatius, who had defended Marseille and made himself *comes* of Africa. The name of Placidia meant something to the Visigoths, but neither they nor the Vandals had much respect for women-rulers or child-emperors. The Vandals sacked Baetica, where they have left their name in Vandalicia, now Andalusia, though they were there for less than a decade. They took the great

ports of Seville and Cartagena, and disposing of ships, raided the Balearic Isles. Those who became Christians adopted the Arian version which enhanced the authority of their king. They were not city-dwellers: Vandalism was the defacement or demolition of walls, sacred to Roman emperors, in order to make themselves secure.

The basin of the western Mediterranean, *Mare nostrum*, was at the mercy of the Vandals. The Roman fleet which had blockaded the ports against the Goths included ships of Carthage, grossly exaggerated by Orosius. Bonifatius, *comes* of Africa, had to contend with the landowners of Libya, who drew their wealth from sales of corn to Rome. His second wife was an Arian and he approached King Gundered to engage a contingent of Vandals, without result. But when the king died and was succeeded by his half-brother Gaiseric, things changed. Gaiseric seized the opportunity to migrate to Africa with all his people and dependents. They crossed at the Straits and took the coastal road through Mauretania. They were besieging Hippo when St Augustine died there on August 28 430.⁵⁶

As the Vandals prepared to leave Baetica in May 429, the Sueves pursued them and they turned back to resist. The Suevic leader Hermegarius was drowned in the Guadiana near Mérida. He may have been the heir of King Hermeric bent on a youthful exploit: Hydatius does not explain, but for him the Sueves, still pagan, desecrated the shrine of St Eulalia, the most Roman city of Ulterior.

The strong man in the west was now Aetius, a Roman of Scythian descent, who defended the northern frontier with the help of Salian Franks, still heathen: those who became Christian were orthodox: the Arian variant struck no roots among them. Placidia received conflicting advice, but relied first on Bonifatius in Africa. Her western court could accept a boy emperor, but not a patrician appointed from the East. Felix was killed in 430 after a scuffle in Italy. Aetius governed the northern Gauls, *Gallia crinita*, while the civilian pretorian prefect was at Arles. Some Goths marched on Arles with a view to taking Narbonne, the scene of Placidia's marriage. The prefect Avitus appealed to Aetius for troops and he sent his deputy Litorius, who cleared Arles but could not prevail over Theodoric at Toulouse, who adhered to the *foedus* with Rome. Aetius profited by his successes in the north to become *magister* of both services. His career was to last until 453, outliving Theodoric and Placidia, itself a remarkable feat of endurance, during which Theodoric conformed to what was required of him, to support the prefect at Arles, police the province of Aquitania in putting down rebellious serfs and supplying contingents when urgently needed, watching the excesses of his Vandal rivals under King Gaiseric, who had the advantage of sea-power and a policy of ruthless diplomacy.

Hydatius' immediate task was with the Sueves, who oppressed his Roman flock in Gallaecia. He went to appeal to Aetius, while the Goths sent one Vetto to seek an understanding with the Sueves in vain. In 432 Aetius, having tamed the nearer Franks, sent him back in the company of a *comes* Censorius, appointed to govern the Romans. An agreement was made with the Sueves, but once Censorius left it was soon breached. Hydatius gives only a broken picture of the Spains. In former times, the landowners of Tarraconensis were connected with those of southern Gaul, and there had been only one army in the Spains, the Seventh Legion at Leon replaced by detachments spaced across the *limes* to the Ocean, and now Hispanized. Cartaginensis, Baetica and Lusitania were regarded as Roman and under the administration

of the vicarius of the western prefect at Seville. The pacified south was defended only by the sea and the *limes* beyond the Straits south of Volubilis at the level of Fez and Marrakush.

The Sueves occupied the conventus of Braga and Oporto, which have the only concentration of Germanic place-names in the Peninsula. As successors to the Roman army, they had no close regard for provincial divisions, though they knew the difference between Ulterior and Citerior and considered Mérida to lie in their zone. Goths had been granted Aquitania II and Toulouse and Bordeaux and looked to the prefect at Arles. They had not proved successful in the Spains, in part, because they had a stronger impulse for domination through unity than other barbarians; if Romania was to be superseded, it should be by Gothia, not by Germania.

Among their rivals were the Burgundians, who submitted to Aetius after he had subdued the Salian Franks. He used them to free Narbonne from the Goths, and rewarded them with land in Sapaudia, Savoy, west of Lake Lemman. Their leader forwent the title of king for a time and was satisfied to be a *magister*, a general in the Roman army. They equivocated between Arianism and orthodox Christianity, adopted by their leader's wife. These victories brought Aetius the title of *comes* and of *magister* of both services, together with a consulate. Placidia and her court mistrusted his ambitions. His only rival was Bonifatius, whom she recalled from Africa to her side. Hippo had held out for a year, but it was clear that Carthage itself could be saved only by negotiation. Boniface attempted to dismiss Aetius but, having resorted to arms, was soon defeated and killed. His son-in-law Sebastian attempted to succeed him but fled to the east to bide his time, while Aetius received the title of patrician. Although Placidia sought to placate the Vandals, she was unable to prevent Gaiseric from occupying Carthage, making a provision that supplies to Rome should not be affected.

Hydatius noted under 434 the consecration of Sixtus III in Rome (July 432-March 440). He obtained news from an Arab priest named Germanus and 'other Greeks', which suggests that ships from Alexandria reached his distant diocese. He heard of the attempts by eastern bishops to persuade Theodosius II against the Nestorian heresy. In 436 he received letters including Bishop Cyril's protest to Nestorius. He says nothing of the youth Valentinian III, and little of Placidia, who resigned her regency in 437, when her son reached eighteen. He approved of Aetius, whom he had known, but not of the Goths, less still of the Sueves, who were nearest, and least of all the Priscillianists, who still adhered to their martyr. The orthodox bishop of Lugo was unable to prevent the consecration of two Priscillianists in Gallaecia in 433. The patrician Aetius intervened when some Goths laid siege to Narbonne in 436, and he records its liberation in the following year, also mentioning that he had killed 20,000 Burgundian rebels. Censorius, accompanied by one Fretimund, was sent as envoy to the Sueves in 437. It became usual to send both a Roman and a Goth on these missions, which were frequent. The Romans were not yet disposed to admit a Gothic force to be stationed in the Spains, perhaps because they were in negotiation with the Vandals whom they hoped to befriend. The Vandals in Africa were taking over the estates of Roman landowners and putting down the numerous small Christian communities, each with its own bishop.

The Suevic king Hermeric fell ill in 438, and was ready to make peace before handing over his authority to his son Rechila. He survived, still incapacitated, until 441. Rechila established his own reputation by entering Baetica and crushing one Andevotus with his army or guard on

the Singilis, the Genil, and taking his gold and silver, while in Africa Gaiseric finally occupied Carthage 'by treachery': oral contracts by barbarians were of little duration unless sealed by the exchange of hostages and a marriage. The Sueves were at least consistent in their hostility towards the Vandals.

When Hydatius says that Aetius killed so many Goths in 438, he probably refers to a punitive expedition after the attack on Narbonne. In the following year, Litorius launched an attack on Theodoric at Toulouse, using a force of Huns. This was followed by a peace, the terms of which are not given, Hydatius recognizes that Litorius had been rash, and this may imply that the prefect at Arles disowned him. Theodoric remained loyal to the *foedus*: he was able at least to hold his own.

Meanwhile the landowners in the Spains were still in need of police to suppress their rebellious serfs, whose plight has something to do with the continuing need for victuals to supply both Roman armies and their federates. This was particularly the case in the great villae of Tarraconensis, but less so in the poorer parts of Gallaceia, troubled by the Priscillianists, whose teachings were adapted to the under-privileged. Hydatius leaves little doubt that he favoured the urban and landowning class which found shelter in the cities and walled towns and appealed to the *rector* or judge in Lugo or to himself against barbarian intrusions. But on the great estates round Saragossa, which prided itself on its numerous martyrs, and Pamplona, a Roman city in the midst of the Vascones, the peasants formed leagues with those independent Vascones, who, though subdued by Rome, had never adopted the Christian religion or abandoned their ancient language. The rebels were *bacaudae* or *bagaudae*.⁵⁷

In Gallaecia Priscillianism remained rife. The Sueves built or rebuilt their 'new castle' at Oporto, on the site of the present city near the mouth of the Douro. The place-names Suegos, Suevos, near Corunna, and Monte Suevo on the Cantabrian coast suggest that contact by sea with the Gauls was maintained. King Rechila followed his raid into Baetica by occupying the city of Mérida. When Censorius came again to negotiate he was surrounded at Mértola and obliged to capitulate. On his father's death in 441 Rechila attempted to cast his mantle over Baetica and Cartaginensis, appointing his own bishop at Seville. His people remained strongly hostile to the Vandals, and his presence may not have been so unwelcome as Hydatius thought. The situation in Tarraconensis was a different matter. The revolt of the *bagaudae* was serious enough to call for Asturius to be sent with the high rank of *magister* of both services and a contingent of Gothic auxiliaries. He slaughtered many, and when he was recalled, his son-in-law Merobaudes fell on the *bagaudae* at Araceli, not far from Pamplona. Merobaudes was soon recalled and later reputed as a poet, recipient of a statue in Rome. Sebastian, the heir of Bonifatius, returned from the East and attempted to establish himself at Barcelona, but was driven off and sought refuge with the Vandals. Gaiseric followed his annexation of Carthage and its fleet by raiding Sicily and laying siege to Palermo, where he found Arian sympathizers. Only the Eastern fleet could have driven him off, but it compromised and he withdrew. As late as 445, Vandals raided Toronio, the district of Tuy at the mouth of the Minho, where they carried off a number of families.⁵⁸

In 446 Vitus was sent as *magister* with a large contingent of auxiliaries to occupy Cartaginensis and Baetica. On the appearance of Rechila and his army, the Goths went over

to them and Vitus was forced to depart. Once more the Goths were not led by their king, and were not disposed to fight against fellow-Germans. Hydatius' quarrel with the Priscillianists was kept alive by Pope Leo I (440-461), who despatched instructions to Astorga about the pursuit of heretics. Hydatius was able to arrest suspects, a task facilitated when Rechila died and was succeeded at Mérida by his son Rechiarius, the first barbarian ruler to become an orthodox catholic. This was either through having a catholic mother or from the exertions of Bishop Antoninus of Mérida or both. He reigned from August 448 to 456. If Hydatius does not exult, it was because he soon took a Gothic Arian to wife, and his reign ended in grief.

The Roman dynasty in the West also came to an inglorious end. Valentinian III married a daughter of Theodosius II, Eudocia, who gave him daughters but no son. Theodosius himself had daughters and no heir. Placidia lived on in Rome until November 450. She had not lost her mistrust of the patrician Aetius. Her son was much influenced by his *cubicularii* or chamberlains, who formed an inner cabinet within the palatine order. They were fortified by the existence of a strong and long-lived bishop in Leo, who had experience of lay administration. Theodosius himself was inclined towards peace with the Vandals of Africa, as was Placidia. Gaiseric had at his side Sebastian, the heir to Bonifatius, until he fell out with him and had him executed in 450.

Meanwhile, the Roman patron of Theodoric and the Visigoths of Toulouse was Avitus, prefect of Arles and Gallia *togata*. In July 450 Theodosius died after falling from his horse in Constantinople. He was 49, and was succeeded by his sister Pulcheria, who married the senior general Marcian, a soldier-emperor at last, but one who had family by a previous marriage and was a member of the reigning dynasty only by his second marriage. The link was even more attenuated when Pulcheria died in 453.

Theodoric had kept in touch with the Sueves by various missions, and now sought an alliance with King Rechiarius by offering him a daughter in marriage. Although the accession of an orthodox Christian made it possible to send suspects of heresy for trial to Mérida, Rechiarius' succession was not unanimously approved by his people, or even his own family. In Seville, the Roman *comes* Censorius was executed by one Agiulf.⁵⁹ In February 449 Rechiarius went to meet his Gothic father-in-law. On the way he raided the Vascones. Hydatius' phrase 'to inaugurate his reign' suggests that this was an exploit to prove his mettle against pagans. His route may have taken him by way of Pamplona where Merobaudes had put down the *bagaudae* in 443. One Basilius gathered the *bagaudae* and killed the (Gothic) federates, attacking the church at Taracena further south, where Bishop Leo was wounded in his church and died. But on his return in July Rechiarius joined with Basil to ravage an area round Lérida, which was entered by a trick and hostages taken.⁶⁰

The emperor Theodosius and his aunt Placidia were already dead when Attila and his Huns broke into northern Gaul. They took Metz in April 451 and laid siege to Orleans. Aetius appealed urgently to the prefect Avitus and assembled the Gothic king, the Salian Franks, the Burgundians and others to fight the crucial battle of the Catalaunian Fields near Troyes on June 20. Attila was defeated and withdrew eastwards, but was still able to sack Aquileia before his death in 454. King Theodoric I died gloriously in the fray. The victory belonged to Aetius, who urged the heir Thurismund to return at once lest others usurp his crown. It was good

advice, for he reigned only until 454 when his brothers assassinated him and took his place. The Goths regarded the triumph as theirs, and it became the starting point for a policy of expansion with or without the approval of Rome. For Hydatius the new age was announced by an earthquake and alarming celestial phenomena.⁶¹

When Attila was killed, it was not by Aetius alone, but with the intervention of troops sent by Marcian. But Aetius was patrician and commander-in-chief in the West and, apart from the imperial marriage, in as good a position as Marcian. In September 453, Valentinian III was persuaded by his chamberlains to kill him with his own hand. The young emperor sent the usual double embassy headed by Mansuetus, *comes* for the Spains, to explain the case to the Sueves, but it was now that the Goths took over the policing of Tarraconensis. Thurismund's brother, Frederic, slaughtered the *bagaudae* in the name of Rome: no more is heard of them. Thurismund was murdered by his brothers Theodoric II and Frederic, as accomplice.

On March 16 455, the clients of Aetius avenged their master by assassinating Valentinian III at a military parade. The West was left with the Empress Eudocia and her daughters. A senator, Petronius Maximus, twice consul, married the widow, who was perhaps reluctant. One daughter was promised to the heir of the Vandal king, Huneric, who already had a Gothic bride. Petronius was proclaimed immediately in Rome, apparently a passive accomplice to the murder. He scarcely reigned, for in May a Vandal fleet seized Rome to demand a share of the imperial inheritance and Petronius was stoned by a mob. Gaiseric occupied the city on behalf of his son on June 2.⁶² The Imperial claim would pass through Valentinian's other daughter Placidia to her husband, the senator Anicius Olybrius. None of the contenders possessed a sufficient land-army, and only the East had a fleet able to match the Vandals, who retired from the city taking with them the ex-empress and her daughters.

Nor were the Goths ready to be outshone by the Vandals. The prefect of Arles had the support of Theodoric II, and he was proclaimed by a session of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy at Ugarnum, Beaucaire, on the Rhone in July 455. He was welcomed in Rome in September. An enthusiastic panegyric was delivered by the young poet and leader of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy, Sidonius. In an undated letter to the emperor's son, Sidonius provides a unique description of a barbarian king at the height of his power. He found Theodoric accessible and patient, tallish and shaven, with the Gothic 'tresses' over the ears, bushy eyebrows and drooping moustachios. His body was muscular and fit, his knees bare with horse-hide boots tied with single cords and loose ends. At his table the cooking was excellent: there was no haste to replenish the wine-bowls. The conversation was commonplace (Sidonius knew no Gothic). There were no entertainers unless perchance a string-player. The household was orderly and not luxurious. The king began his day with his priests: Sidonius thought his devotions perfunctory rather than spiritual. He visited his stables and treasury. When he went hunting, he never carried his own bow: he was a good shot. He enjoyed a gambling-game and liked to win: it was prudent to let him do so. He was guarded night and day.⁶³

In Italy Avitus sought an understanding with Marcian against the Vandals and mobilized the barbarians, now free of Huns. He sent a mission to Rechiarius to urge the Sueves to respect the treaties. The Goths did the same, but the Sueves claimed to be protectors of Cartaginensis and Tarraconensis. Rechiarius was prepared to defy the Goths, and Theodoric II marched

against him with a motley army under the guise of Avitus' favour. It met Rechiarius on the River Órbigo in October 455 and forced him to retire wounded to Oporto. Theodoric took Braga, which he sacked and Rechiarius was killed, perhaps by his own dissidents, for Agiulf was left to govern the Sueves, while Theodoric proceeded to occupy Mérida, a decision that proved important since the capital of Lusitania has remained with Spain while the Suevic kingdom is the nucleus from which Portugal was born. If Hydatius hoped for an improvement in his fortunes, he was disappointed. The later years of his annals are replete with sinister omens.

During the onslaught Rechiarius had issued coins in his own name, silver *siliquae* of Honorius surcharged 'by order of Rechiarius king' and the mark Br for Braga, as if to recall that the monarchy of the Sueves had legal and Christian consent. This was unique for barbarian rulers, who did not risk authorizing forgeries. Agiulf did not long survive in Oporto but, when he was removed, the Sueves remained divided. In 455 a band of 400 Herules, sea-borne marauders from the north, landed in seven longships on the coast of Lugo. On being driven off they raided the Cantabrian coast as far as Vardulia, the future Castile, a foretaste of later Viking exploits.

If Theodoric himself intended to hold Roman Lusitania, he retired in some haste. Hydatius ascribed this to the intervention of St Eulalia, but she was assisted by news from Gaul and Italy. The Vandals had sent a fleet of sixty ships against Italy. They were driven off by Riccimer, the son of a Sueve and a daughter of King Wallia, now *comes* of the barbarian contingents in Italy. These also demanded to be paid, but Riccimer had control of the armed forces since the Roman guards could no longer operate without the consent of the barbarians. Avitus attempted to disband the auxiliaries, and failing, set out for Gaul for Gothic help. He was defeated near Piacenza on October 17 456 and made bishop there: he perished when he again tried to reach Arles.

The next emperor was Majorian, commander of the imperial guard, who was put forward by Riccimer. He was proclaimed on February 2 457 but was not received by the senate until December, partly because the Eastern emperor had died and was succeeded by another soldier Leo (457-474), who engaged numerous Ostrogoths, paid for by oppressing his own tax-payers. The Ostrogoths had two kings who occupied the valley of the Danube and Pannonia. In the West, Aetius had allowed the Franks and others to settle. His successor Aegidius, holding Soissons, kept the support of the Salian Franks, friendly pagans, and the Burgundians, who entered the province of Lyon, though its capital remained Roman. Majorian's aim was to reunite the west against the Vandals of Carthage. At Lyon, he heard a panegyric from Sidonius, its most famous son, and proceeded to appease the Goths before assembling a fleet at Cartagena. It was destroyed by a sudden attack from the Vandal navy and he was obliged to retire to Italy. There Riccimer turned against him and killed him in November 461. Riccimer then permitted the senate to put forward Libius Severus, who, being a mere candidate of the barbarians with no military record, was not recognized by Leo.

Theodoric had claimed to support Majorian, the last serious Roman contender, and had sent Sunyeric to intervene in the north-west. Hydatius reports the comings and goings from the

death of Agiulf in June 457, with a large number of entries for 460 and/or 461 and nothing at all for 462 to 464.⁶⁴

Hydatius offers a sorry picture of the march of the barbarian horde across northern Spain in 457. They entered Palencia and Astorga by trickery, pretending to be the friends of Rome, sacking the cities and devastating the countryside, though they could not enter the fort of Coyanza, now Valencia de Don Juan. In Gallaecia, the disorders continued. Maldras, who had seized Oporto, was himself killed at the end of February 460, a fate Hydatius thought he deserved. At Easter, Sueves suddenly attacked Lugo and killed its *rector* when the Romans thought they were safe. Sunyeric and Nepotian sent a force which despoiled Lugo and its district. The Sueve Frumarius arrested Bishop Hydatius at Chaves and detained him until August when he was released, for which he blamed informers. Another Sueve named Remismund challenged Frumarius and raided his neighbours the Auregenses and the coast of the conventus of Lugo, and this set off a war between him and Frumarius. A peace was patched up and Theodoric II sent a mission, while Sunyeric seized Scallabis, now Santarém, on the Tagus. Hydatius records the return of Majorian and his death at the hands of Riccimer. When Sunyeric was recalled, it was now Theodoric who appointed a successor to Nepotian. In Gallaecia, the cocks crowed at sunset, and the moon was blood-coloured. The conventus of Braga saw the portentous birth of two monsters, and it was heard that a similar phenomenon happened at Leon. For Hydatius, the Arians were in the ascendant, and there were two Arian powers in the stronghold of the Roman faith.

Hydatius reports that Gaiseric sent the widow Eudocia back to Constantinople while her other daughter married the senator of Rome, Olybrius. In Gallaecia, *villae* were struck by lightning and the flocks burnt, and twins, who could not be separated, were born. The *comes* Agrippinus, a Gaul, quarrelled with Aegidius and allowed the Goths to take Narbonne. Aegidius protested to Rome, but Agrippinus was cleared and sent back with equal powers with Aegidius. Among the Goths, Theodoric's military brother Frederic, who had savagely put down the *bagaudae* in Tarraconensis, tried to challenge Aegidius in northern Gaul. With divine aid and that of the Armoricans, Frederic was defeated and killed in the neighbourhood of Orleans. For Hydatius, Aegidius had been a noble warrior whose works had divine approval. The Gallaeco-Romans now attempted to deal directly, sending a mission to Theodoric: it met with one led by Cyril and both returned to Lugo. Cyril brought with him a Sueve Remismund, causing 'undisciplined perturbation' or anarchy. Aegidius had approached the Vandals: his nobility was tarnished when he himself was killed; Hydatius did not know if he was poisoned or betrayed. Meanwhile, Remismund, the son of Maldras, secured arms, presents and a wife from Theodoric, and obtained possession of Conimbriga in Portugal, seizing the property of the noble Cantaber. Remismund's envoys brought news of the death of Severus in November 465. Conimbriga remained with the Sueves.

Hydatius' hope of saving the souls of the Sueves vanished when they received an Arian bishop named Ajax, who imported the 'pestiferous plague' from the Goths.⁶⁵ His own end was filled with foreboding. When the Vandals were defeated in Sicily, Riccimer asked the Emperor Leo to appoint a colleague in the West. He was Anthemius, a grandson of the patrician of Arcadius, who had married a daughter of Marcian by his first marriage. He was made Augustus in Rome on April 12 467 and gave a daughter in marriage to Riccimer, who received some authority

for his claim to be patrician. Sidonius' optimism was aroused and he composed a final panegyric for Anthemius. Hydatius had less cause to rejoice, particularly when a mission sent to the Sueves returned to find that Theodoric II had been assassinated by his brother Euric at the end of 466 or opening of 467.⁶⁶ The principal change was that Theodoric had at least publicly upheld the *foedus*, while Euric, like many Visigothic *optimates*, wanted open independence. They had held Aquitania II from the empire: when there was no emperor they continued to hold it by their own law, *suo jure*. If Euric was less Romanized than his brother, he nevertheless had Roman jurists who formulated his own code for his Roman subjects and for their relations with the Visigoths. It embodied Roman concepts and was largely the work of Leo of Narbonne: it is now known from fragments and was probably in place by 474. When Sidonius wrote to Leo, he noted his responsibility for gathering information about the world's affairs and advising on legal matters, deserts, rewards, treaties and wars. The awkward dualism had changed. At some point the Roman two-thirds in Aquitania had become one-third and the Gothic share increased. The prefect at Arles, Arvandus, was arrested as a traitor for having advised Euric to march northward against the Franks. He was sent to Rome to answer a charge of malversation and it emerged that the critical letter existed. Sidonius went to Rome to speak for him but says that Arvandus destroyed his own case before the senate, by appearing with no sign of contrition and boldly asserting that he had nothing to answer for. He was condemned to death, and the sentence deferred by exile.

Sidonius was not the only member of the senatorial class to become a bishop with little or no training in theology. He wrote little verse but continued to address letters to his friends. He resisted Euric and was exiled for two months to the high Pyrenees. When he returned he was required to go to Euric at Bordeaux. He saw the king only once in two months. Euric had become the 'wolf of our times'. He had taken up the sword and shattered the *foedus*, to be feared more for his assault on Christian laws than on city walls. The very word 'catholic' was repugnant to his lips and he fancied that he owed more to the truth of his superstition than to his virile energy. The sees of Bordeaux and other places were vacant on the death of the incumbents, who had presented men to the lower orders, so that a tract of desolation had been created. This opened the prospect that heretics would take over as people sank in despond, with church roofs falling in, doors overgrown with brambles and the chancels a resting-place for cattle: Bishop Crocus of Nîmes and others had been removed, but Arles, Lerins and Marseille were staunch. He personally had refuted a Goth named Madihaurius.

This diatribe conceals the fact that Euric was accustomed to naming his own bishops and good catholics would not allow such to present priests to their own churches. Euric appointed a Gallo-Roman Victorius prefect of Arles and allowed Arvernia autonomy in return for keeping Nîmes and part of Provence. As bishop, Sidonius could claim exemption for his own estates and those inherited by his wife, the daughter of Avitus. He learned to accept Victorius as *comes* and his own son became an ally of the Goths. When he died (in 479?), Euric took over the Auvergne in 480 as well as part of Provence. Sidonius mentions that the port of Bordeaux was frequented by Ostrogoths, Burgundians, and sea-faring Herules and Saxons. Independence brought young Germanic heroes in search of favour and fortune with their bands. This horde sufficed to outnumber the Sueves. The Visigoths had not done well north of the Loire. The Salian Franks were pagans, and catholics often preferred friendly pagans to

Arians. The Britons who now populated Armorica between the mouth of the Seine and Loire were Christians who had fought on the side of the Aetius and others against the Huns.⁶⁷

In Euric's eyes his authority extended to Arles, Narbonne and Septimania. The northward expansion covered Aquitania I, whose capital was at Bourges, but included Albi and Cahors not far north of Toulouse. His garrisons held strategic cities in the Spains. His aim was not to absorb the Sueves, but to harness them to his religion, the basis for an alliance of Arian barbarian monarchies. Hydatius records the strengthening of the Gothic garrison at Mérida in 469, after which the Roman governor of Lisbon Lusidius opened his city to the Sueves. He notes the death of Bishop Hilary of Rome at the end of February 468 and the succession of Simplicius. The Aunonenses of Ourense made peace with the Sueves, who controlled places in Asturiensis and Lusitania. Lusidius led a mission on behalf of Remismund to the emperor. Hydatius does not give its object, or say whether it reached its destination and received any answer. He ends with numerous signs and portents in Gallaecia. Near Lais on the Minho, Christians reported the catching of four strange fish marked with letters in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and some numerals which mounted to 365. It was followed by a fall of bitter green seeds from the sky and wonders too long to mention.⁶⁸

The faded glory of Rome departed when the Greek Emperor Anthemius tried to subdue Euric before reducing the Vandals. He was defeated in 471 without reaching Arles: he was murdered, and in 472 Riccimer also disappeared. The Burgundian king Gundobad, still an Arian, tolerated catholics, and succeeded Riccimer as commander of the barbarians in Italy. Their pseudo-emperor Glycerius lasted a few months in 474, after which they confined themselves to the valley of the Rhone as neighbours to the Visigoths. After the brief episode of the Burgundian Gundobad, the barbarian command passed to Odoacer, who sent the Imperial regalia in chests to the East, less perhaps in triumph than as a recognition that he did not aspire to appoint an emperor of his own making. The Emperor Leo died in 474, leaving his authority to Zeno, an Isaurian who had married his daughter Verina. She had a streak of Leo's ruthlessness, but Zeno faced the fact that too many barbarian troops had been engaged, whom he could not pacify. Euric was not the only Gothic king: the Ostrogoths had two leaders, both named Theoderic, one more legitimate than the other. Zeno consulted the Eastern senate, never so lofty as the Roman and closer to the merchant-class who paid taxes. When he asked his Ostrogothic general to return to his homeland, he was confronted with the reply that the land no longer sufficed, since Leo had so increased his army.⁶⁹ This made the Ostrogoths take a firm line. Both Theoderics agreed not to fight one another: when one was favoured at the expense of the other his men would go over to the one who was paid: if they negotiated separately the result would be the same. In the event, Theoderic the Ostrogoth, who became the Great (474–526), acquired recognition in Pannonia and Illyricum, and became king of Italy in Ravenna, still receiving subsidies in gold from the emperor. He did not abandon Arian Christianity, but allowed Romans on whom he depended for coin and for administration of his far-flung domains to keep their own faith and customs.

He made formal contact with the Visigoths in Provence before the death of Euric, which occurred from natural causes at Arles in 484. Euric's son Alaric II was acclaimed at Toulouse, acquiring southern Gaul and sharing the Spains with the Sueves. The Vandals, also Arians, professed to be Romans at heart but oppressed the great estates of the Roman landowners



Triple gold solidus of Anastasius, 491-518, showing King Theoderic the Ostrogoth.

and their catholic inhabitants and numerous clergy. They lost their military tradition: it had been their navy and the opportunism of Gaiseric that made them feared.

North of the Loire, the Salian Franks of Clovis (481-511) had defeated the son of Aetius at Soissons in 486 and dominated Gallia *crinita*. He was a heathen, but his men had never been Arians. The Armorican Britons, who now called the country Little Britain, were Christians and no friends of the Arian Goths. In 496, the Visigoths held Saintes.⁷⁰ In Aquitania I, the Visigothic hold was tenuous. The church survived through the independence of its bishops, who appointed their priests and maintained a network of correspondence when the roads were open. None were now so indiscreet as Sidonius had been, and their themes were usually pious, with

only occasional references to political affairs.⁷¹ To his east, Alaric found the Burgundians, whose King Gundobad was not disposed to join an Arian league. The Rhone had been a thoroughfare for the transport of Roman troops, and was used for commerce, which centred on the great port of Marseille. The Ostrogothic occupation of Provence barred their way to expansion southwards and gave Alaric an ally. He married a daughter of Theoderic and his sister married Theoderic's heir. His reign was longer than that of his father, but the antecedents of his disastrous defeat and death at the hands of Clovis remain obscure. Cassiodorus says that Theoderic attempted to negotiate. He could not prevent the Burgundians from siding with the Salian Franks. In the spring of 507, Alaric issued his revised code of laws, the *Breviarium*, intended to stress his sovereign authority and to express his equitable treatment of all his subjects. It was too little and too late. Clovis defeated him on the field at Vogladum, Vouillé, near Poitiers. His men dispersed and Clovis entered Bordeaux without difficulty. Alaric's son Amalaric was recognized at Toulouse, but he was still a child unable to govern.

The Gothic settlement in Tarraconensis had begun even before the defeat of Alaric. The chronicle of Saragossa covers the years 450 to 568. It records that in 494 the Goths entered the Spains and that in 496 one Burdunellus rebelled. In the following year, the Goths settled, *sedes acceperunt*, in the Spains. Burdunellus was sent to Toulouse, where he was publicly burnt. When the chronicler says 'the Spains' he means his own province. The resistance still smouldered in 506, when the Goths entered Tortosa, killing one Peter, whose head was sent to Saragossa, now the headquarters of the settlers.

5

SUEVES, VISIGOTHS AND ROMANS

The Visigoths had been settled in Aquitania II for ninety years. They have left remarkably little trace of their stay. Even the place-names formerly attributed to them have been questioned.⁷² There is nothing resembling the Germanic toponyms clustered in Suevic Gallaecia. The Visigoths did not spend their income on civic monuments, but on matters closer to themselves. Apart perhaps from their main church in Toulouse, they appear not to have built churches of their own, but shared those of the Catholics. The Goth differed from most Romans in being taller and larger, with fair hair and paler skin. He was unkempt, with locks over his ears. He did not wear the toga, nor pelts, but the chlamys, the tunic of the Roman army; this was not distinctive in the Spains, where an edict of September 410 required all functionaries to appear so clad before the *vicarius* under pain of a large fine, thus presenting a military appearance. Their Arian bishops baptized them with Germanic names, often so distorted as to conceal their derivation.⁷³ In the Roman army, orders were transmitted in writing and interpreted by junior officers to those who did not read. Many would understand barrack-room Latin infused with numerous Germanisms. Those who served Roman landowners would know more, especially when they took wives who did not learn Gothic. Their *optimates* might well have become landowners, as the Vandals in Africa were doing, but for the arrival of Germanic adventurers. The infusion of more military Ostrogothic leaders took place after the marriage of Alaric and became robust only after his defeat.

The reigning dynasty of Toulouse survived, but Goths did not obey a boy-king or his mother. Command was exercised by a much older half-brother Gesaleic, debarred from ruling by illegitimacy. But regencies were unknown to the Goths, since a regent would have the same powers as a king and would usurp him rather than cede to a Goth unable to impose his own decisions.⁷⁴ Theoderic had tried to negotiate to save Alaric II and the child Amalaric, but he did not trust Gesaleic. His army in Provence was commanded by a relative Hebba or Ibba, who succeeded in putting the Visigoth to flight and in establishing an Ostrogothic protectorate in both Septimania and Tarraconensis. Franks already held Bordeaux, and when they and the Burgundians attempted to attack Gesaleic, he fell back on Barcelona, where the *comes* Goaric who had been prominent under Alaric was killed. Gesaleic fled to seek the support of the Vandals, who gave him money but no men. When he returned to Barcelona, he was defeated by Hebba and sought refuge with the Burgundians north of the River Durance, where he was killed.

The disaster at Poitiers brought about a redistribution of the western Goths. The court and old nobility moved into Septimania, which became known as Gothic Gaul. It was insufficient to maintain a large population, and had never belonged to the Franks. They overflowed into Tarraconensis where there had been numerous Roman *villae*, but the command in the Spains was exercised by the more military Ostrogoths, who now had a share in the reigning dynasty. The bulk of the Gothic population gradually moved on to reach the upper Ebro and sources of the Douro, where they would create the future county of Castile. Their tradition of oral law lasted into the Middle Ages and their epic poems, in irregular metre based on beats rather than feet, portend the *Poema de mio Cid*, the tale of a Castilian hero who forged a territory of his own in Muslim Valencia, which had to be abandoned on his death in 1099, no king but the very symbol of Spanish nobility,

Pues la sangre de los godos
y el linage, y la nobleza
tan crecida
por quantas vías y modos
se pierde su gran alteza
en esta vida!
Unos, por poco valer,
por quan baxos y abatidos
que los tienen!
y otros, por no tener,
con oficios no devidos
se mantienen.

The Goths who settled on the northern part of the great meseta, much poorer in resources, were of purer blood, if less noble. Some remained behind with the Gallo-Romans. Having accepted the catholic religion, Clovis died in 511 and his realms were divided between his four grandchildren, who had their seats in the distant north round Paris and made their Merovingian pantheon at St Denis. Not many Franks appear to have settled in the south, and they exercised their sway mainly through their *duces* or the *comites* appointed to govern the cities. Since they had never been Arians, the Gallo-Roman episcopacy felt some relief. The historian of the Franks, Gregory of Tours, born in the Auvergne, never identifies himself with them, and draws a vivid picture of their scandalous way of life, easily redeemed when they displayed generosity to the church of St Martin of Tours.

Theoderic the Ostrogoth was king of Italy and governed all the barbarian forces there: he received a subsidy in gold from the Emperor Anastasius (491-518): much of this found its way back through the channels of commerce. The imperial accountants were instructed to keep strict books to guard against malversation. Theoderic implanted a dual regime in which the Arian military class practised its own religion and the Roman functionaries and majority were catholics. It was the age of the Christian writers Cassiodorus and Boetius, who enjoined the virtues of patience and forbearance. Arianism was able to survive in the Spains after it had been abandoned almost everywhere else. By ancient practice the church followed the civil divisions of the Roman empire. In the Gauls, the provincial borders had been blurred and bishops obeyed an archbishop or ruler of bishops, a term not used in the Spains, where the

senior bishop of each province was its metropolitan. The provinces were not immune from change. Tarraconensis kept its name, though the Goths were chiefly at, or near, Saragossa. Cartaginensis covered a vast area with its capital at the port of New Carthage, Cartagena, and spreading to the meseta and the Tagus at Toledo: it came to have nearly a score of dioceses. Baetica, the Roman south, where the *vicarius* dwelled at Seville, had lost Tangier in Africa to the Vandals and contained about ten dioceses. The ancient Lusitania, also vast, was the Further Province, with its great city of Mérida. It had lost the four dioceses between the Tagus and the Douro, to the Sueves. These last, now Arians, held Oporto and Braga by imperial award, which did not extend to the conventus of Lugo and Astorga to the north. Above all, the seat of the Visigothic nobility was in Gothic Gaul, which had its capital at Narbonne, with five dioceses. The Visigoths now saw this as their kingdom, with the Spains as their province, governed by Ostrogothic delegates. The imperial law forbidding intermarriage between Romans and Goths had long since gone by the board. Landowners married their daughters to their Gothic protectors, and their children were provided for by contracts drawn up by notaries. In the poorer and less literate meseta these were rare and Goths had no difficulty in implanting their customs on their progeny.

Neither the boy Amalaric nor his Ostrogothic mother was in a position to command, and Ostrogothic practices prevailed. The survival of the Roman church came from Theoderic's toleration and the ability of catholic bishops to convoke councils, which required the consent of the civil power. Arles had replaced Vienne, and Pope Symmachus upheld its primacy over Aix. When Symmachus made Arles the channel for communications with Rome, he was not only recognizing the eminence of Bishop Cesarius but harking back to earlier times when the pretorian prefect of the west had supervised the Spains. In 516 a council for Tarraconensis was attended by nine bishops, including the metropolitan of Cartaginensis and also Illiberi, Granada, in Baetica. In June 517 seven bishops from Tarraconensis met at Lérida, six of them had also attended the year before.

A letter of Theoderic in 516 in Ravenna throws light on his administration in Nearer Spain. It is addressed to Liuveric, a Goth, and Ampelius, a Roman *illustris*. It deals with the shipment of corn and such irregularities as allowing shipmasters to sell in Africa instead of Rome: Marcianus, a *spectabilis*, had behaved correctly but was not obeyed: book-keeping must be strictly attended to. Ten years later, the same two governors were still in place. Theoderic, nearing the end of his reign, names Ampelius before Liuveric and deals with offences contrary to law and good customs. Life must be protected, and murders, too numerous, punished: proper government depended on agriculture and peasants should work in peace. Tax-collectors must not use other than official weights. All taxes belonged to the treasury, and collectors must not demand what could not be paid. All duties on imports must be levied in the customs-house. The minting of coin was a monopoly which private persons must not invade. Taxes were farmed for three years and regulated according to the laws of Euric and Alaric without deduction. Officials were permitted to requisition houses for official use but no more than was necessary. The position of *villicus*, steward, should be abolished.

Pope Symmachus' successor Hormisdas (514-523) took advantage of improved relations with the eastern church to require Bishop Sallust of Seville, as head of the church in Baetica and Lusitania, to accept Greek clergy on the grounds that this was necessary to preserve the unity

of the church (April 521). The effect was soon felt. Relations between eastern merchants, particularly between cosmopolitan Alexandria and the port of Seville, continued, and merchants were soon followed by priests. However, Theoderic's system of Arian alliances sealed by marriages was fragile. He gave daughters to Alaric and to the Burgundian Sigismund, who became a catholic, but his own succession was marred by the early death of his heir. He relied on gold coin issued in Constantinople. Anastasius' successor Justin I (518–527) initiated a compilation of Roman law applicable to the whole world and without specific reference to religion, which, when promulgated by Justinian, was in line with the universalism of ancient Rome.

When Theoderic died in 527, Amalaric was about twenty-four and by Gothic standards of an age to command and govern. He and his court were domiciled in Narbonensis, but the Spains were in the military hands of his Ostrogothic kin. The Franks were far away, and his nobles did not forget what they had lost. It seemed safe for him to contract a catholic marriage to a daughter of Clovis. The Gothic people had spread down the Douro beyond the *agger* of the Seventh Legion and over the northern half of the meseta. Their presence is marked by cemeteries with the row-graves, or *Reihengräber*, in which the inmates are ranged in lines, recalling the bunks in a legionary dormitory. More than seventy are known, extending down the Douro as far as the frontier with the Sueves and southward to Toledo. In some, the warriors are buried with their sword-belts with zoomorphic or other decoration. The proportion with these belts is not large: many warriors served and fell elsewhere. At later levels they diminish in number: there are no inscriptions. In this area, they dominated with their native families.

A letter subjoined to the council of Toledo of 527 shows that Bishop Montanus of Cartaginensis repudiated the concession of the three sees of Segovia, Britabulum (Buitrago) and Cauca (Coca), which had been granted to strangers 'in order that their priests might not wander'. Montanus warned the clergy of Palencia that church property must not be alienated, under threat of punishment by the king through their lord Erga. At some time in the previous decade Arian bishops had been awarded these sees. Toledo was the remotest city in Cartaginensis and Palencia an ancient see nearer the Douro. The Goths were established round the city of Saragossa, famous for its Christian poet Prudentius and its eighteen martyrs, and Palencia had had experience of the Goths when it was plundered in 456. On that occasion the Goths had left a garrison at Mérida in Lusitania. Further north, the Vascones remained pagans, and despite the decree of Theodosius I, the Cantabrians were converted only by the efforts of St Emilianus, San Millán, who died in 574.

Amalaric reigned only from 526 until 531. He was then accused of maltreating his catholic wife, the daughter of Clovis, to oblige her to become an Arian. He was defeated in Narbonensis by Hildebert, a Frank, and killed by a Frankish soldier at Barcelona. There was no Visigothic successor, and the Ostrogothic general Thiudis was acclaimed in December 531.

Having promulgated his code of laws, the Emperor Justinian prepared to overthrow the Vandal kingdom of Carthage, now ruled illegitimately by Gelamir, who disputed the island of Sicily with the Ostrogoths of Italy. His army consisted of a nucleus of well-equipped knights, the *milites*, and a miscellany of others including Huns and other heathens. His fleet was mainly of transports contracted in Alexandria. Many contingents were commanded by leaders called

comites, which Procopius notes as a quite improper use of the word. Those from Pannonia formed the advance-guard under one Martin, who played an honourable part in the taking of Carthage. The Vandal king evacuated it and it fell in a day in 532. There followed a long resistance in Libya and elsewhere. On the fall of the city, the commander Belisarius sent a contingent to occupy Ceuta and the Straits. At Ceuta, Justinian built a church dedicated to the Virgin of Africa, posted a garrison and stationed a flotilla of dromons. He did not embark on a conquest of the Spains, but ordered Belisarius to recover Italy and plunged into a long and ruinous war against the Ostrogothic kingdom. In the Spains King Thiudis had ceased sending his subsidy to the Ostrogoths and now refused to provide help or intervene. He resisted any attempt of the Greeks to land at Seville.

The handful of dromons at Ceuta sufficed to guard the Straits. Merchants reached Seville and other ports as far as the Atlantic coast. From Mértola on the Guadiana, where there are inscriptions in Greek, they unloaded their wares, since the fall at Pulo do Lobo blocks the river, for carriage overland to the cities of Évora and Mérida, where a Greek doctor named Paul so impressed the senatorial class that he was made bishop and metropolitan of Lusitania. He was followed by a boy who came with a party of merchants and he recognized marvellously as his nephew, Fidelis, and trained to become his successor. The shrine of St Eulalia was already famous, and the Greek bishops built or restored chapels, basilicas and a hospice known by the Greek name *xenodoche*. Mérida was said to have become the wealthiest see in the Spains.⁷⁵

The see of Beja, not far away, was occupied by Apringius, c. 540, author of a commentary on the Apocalypse, probably a Greek, and further north the Greeks probably founded the diocese of Iria, where later the relics of St James arrived.⁷⁶ Braga itself had renounced Arianism by 537, when its Bishop Profuturus wrote to Rome to ask whether converts from Arianism should be baptized again. His letter is lost. Belisarius entered Rome and removed Pope Silverius, who was followed by Vigilius on March 29 537. It fell to him to reply. He did so by sending a full account of the errors imputed to the Priscillianists: as regards penitent Arians, more than one form of baptism was permissible: what was essential was attendance at the right church. Procopius, an eyewitness and not a Christian, who completed his history of Justinian's wars by about 550, says nothing about Byzantine Spain, since it came into existence only later. If an expedition against Seville was mounted, it failed. In 541 Thiudis was engaged in beating off a Frankish intrusion across the Pyrenees against Pamplona and Saragossa. Gregory of Tours says that the Franks retired in confusion when the inhabitants of Saragossa paraded round the walls displaying the tunic of St Vincent. They were opposed by King Thiudis and his lieutenant Thiudisclus, who stood well with the people of Tarraconensis and could then afford to secure the south against Greek intrusion.

If Thiudis chose not to intervene in Italy, the people of Baetica showed no overt wish to welcome the Byzantine army. Justinian had made no sign of returning Tangier, which had formerly belonged to Baetica. In 548 Thiudis was murdered at Seville, and in December 549 his successor Thiudisclus suffered the same fate: neither fell in battle. Gregory of Tours and St Isidore, born a little later, say that the latter died by the sword at the hands of conspirators at a feast. The Ostrogothic interlude thus ended. Thiudis had married an Hispana whose resources permitted him to raise a private army of two thousand men.⁷⁷ The extent of

Ostrogothic immigration is not known, but was probably small after 527. Their most significant contribution was the official dualism which permitted Romans and Arians to co-exist. This was more effective in Gothic Gaul, where the Gothic nobles intermarried, but less so in northern Spain where Goths predominated or the south, mainly catholic. Councils of the Roman church were held at the end of the Ostrogothic predominance at Barcelona (c. 540), Lérida (August 546) and Valencia (December 546), in *Tarraconensis* and *Cartaginensis*. The royal succession then passed back to the Visigoths with Agila or Akhila, whose antecedents are not given. He was probably acclaimed by the army rather than by the nobility in Gothic Gaul, but this is uncertain. St Isidore regards him with disfavour.

The balance, if such it was, was upset when the Sueves finally abandoned Arianism and their rulers adopted catholicism. In c. 550, the approach of Profuturus to Rome was followed by the arrival of a Pannonian priest named Martin, now famous as St Martin of Dume, the royal hall close to the city of Braga. St Martin was probably born in about 520 and died on March 29 579. He had studied in the East and knew the Desert Fathers, whose monasteries stretched from Asia Minor to the Thebaid of Alexandria. There the abba set the rule for his monks. A usual form was the *lavra*, in which the monks dwelt in separate cells to seek the good life through abstinence and prayer. They were called to the church by a wooden clapper for the offices, and tilled their gardens or made basketware to sell at the market. Visitors would ask the abba for a cell and often begged him to say something. He might then consider and deliver an anecdote or maxim. These apophthegms were collected over a long period. Many were gathered by John Moschos, and one of St Martin's first projects was to teach his pupil Pascasius Greek to translate more than a hundred into Latin. Their main preoccupation is not with miracles but with how to lead a good life.⁷⁸ When Martin arrived with his baggage of Eastern monasticism, the Sueves were ruled by Ariomir, whose name ends the long silence about the north-west. 'Mir' is powerful and 'Ario' means Arian: after his conversion to Roman Christianity he was Theodemir, and his son Martin's pupil, Miro.⁷⁹ St Martin himself was considered erudite. He was not a historian but a missionary and educator. Gregory, historian of the Franks, says that Martin arrived providentially at the same time as relics of St Martin of Tours, asked for by a King Chararic to cure his little son of leprosy. Chararic is not a Suevic name but that of a leader of the Salian Franks killed by Clovis, c. 507-511.⁸⁰ Gregory, or George Florence, a small man with a lively imagination, of a noble family of the Auvergne, was then a boy of ten and became the nineteenth bishop of Tours at thirty-three in 572.⁸¹ While he respected St Martin of Dume for his learning and seniority, he liked to claim miracles for his own Martin. He does not claim to have met Martin of Dume, and there is no reason to suppose that Martin's arrival was other than an extension of the Greek influence felt at Mértola, Mérida and Iría.

While the Suevic monarchy revived, the reign of the Visigoth Agila lasted only until 555. In his third year, it was disturbed by a rebellion in Cordova. When he attempted to suppress it, he was driven out, losing his son, his treasure and much of his army, having profaned the church of St Acisclus by stabling his beasts in it. The emperor had still few troops to spare from his activities in Italy, but sent P Liberius, an experienced Gallo-Roman, who had been prefect at Arles, with the rank of patrician. Cordova became Corduba Patricia, the brief capital of Byzantine Spain. Agila had relied on the traditionalist Goths of the meseta, but there now appeared a challenger of the old nobility, Athanagild, who was acclaimed at Seville. After a

short struggle Agila was killed by his own men in the strongly orthodox city of Mérida, where the Greek Paul was bishop, or soon to become so.

Athanagild neither risked his fortunes in a great Roman city nor continued the war against the Greeks. He secured the backing of the Goths of the meseta by marrying Godeswinth, who gave him two daughters. His rebellion had lasted more than a year when Agila was defeated and killed and he became the sole ruler, making his seat at the small city of Toledo on the Tagus. For Livy, it was an ancient tribal centre strongly placed at a bend in the river. It had become a Roman cross-roads, and was the scene of councils or synods of the church. It was soon to become famous as the royal city of the Visigoths. The Greeks regarded the mass of Visigoths as unreformed barbarians, but were prepared to tolerate the nobility, provided that it adhered to Ostrogothic dualism. Their own hold on North Africa was insecure, and they have little to tell about the Far West.

Ceuta had replaced Tangier as the capital of Mauritania II, but the military command was at Carthage in Africa proper. Hierocles' *Synecdemus* defines Byzantine Spain as consisting of seven cities, Sagontia, Assidona (Sidonia), Malacca, Corduba Patricia, Carthago Spartaria (Cartagena), Basti (Baza) and another unstated which may be Seville.⁸² Cordova was the only place capable of taking a lead in upper Andalusia, but any landing would require a port and safe access. Valencia had inclined towards the Goths.⁸³ According to St Isidore, when Thiudis appeared, he seized Ceuta. It was quickly recovered by the Byzantines. Athanagild now concluded a treaty with the Byzantines which permitted them to hold the ports. It was probably the work of P. Liberius, who returned to the East by the end of 552. Justinian wanted to be remembered for his buildings, churches and also castles designed for a small garrison to dominate a large area. The Goths, for their part, could travel great distances but lacked siege equipment.

Athanagild, like Amalaric, was disposed to reach an understanding with the Franks. The four seats of the Merovingians were far away. Sigisbert who inherited Rheims asked for the hand of Athanagild's younger daughter Brunhild: she was given a rich dowry and was well received in the winter of 566, accepting conversion to catholicism. His half-brother Chilperic, who had received Soissons and already had several wives, asked for her elder sister Galswinth, who also received a dowry and abandoned her Arian faith: she was soon garrotted by her husband. Sigisbert was murdered in 585. Of the alliance, this left only the widow Brunhild with an heir and daughters. Chilperic, returning to his Frankish mistress Fredegund, survived until 594. He was the most powerful of the Merovingians, having annexed the Burgundians, who in 534 ceased to have kings of their own.

The Franks had known nothing like the general migration of the Visigoths into Gothic Gaul and the Spains. Their kings, nominally Christians, needed the services of the bishops, but conducted themselves with the violence and promiscuity attributed to barbarian conquerors. Chilperic was the most uncomfortable neighbour since he had acquired with the Burgundians a claim to the valley of the Rhone and the port of Marseille. More than half a century had passed since the Franks had seized Aquitania, and the occupation had not been legalized. Most of the cities of the old Gothic kingdom were settled on the two princesses.⁸⁴ This scarcely affected the Gothic succession, which could not pass to a woman, nor did it give control of the Franks, since female succession was expressly forbidden by Salic law.

Athanagild died in 567, having survived the Emperor Justinian by two years. There followed an interregnum of several months while negotiations took place. They resulted in the accession of Liuva in Narbonensis, a member of a noble family which had intermarried with catholics. He entrusted the Spains to his brother Leovigild, who married Athanagild's Arian widow, Godeswinth. Leovigild had already a catholic wife who gave him two sons, Reccared and Hermenegild, but the second marriage brought him the *fideles* or clients of the northern meseta and the city of Toledo.⁸⁵

The concept of the passage of *fideles* through marriage had a distant precedent in the Emperor Theodosius's entry into the Pannonian dynasty, and perhaps on the Merovingian dynasty in Gaul, but it did not mean partition, a concept entirely repugnant to the Visigoths. Liuva's heir was his brother whose succession would result in the union of Gothic Gaul and the Spains, Toledo becoming the royal seat.

In planting his capital at a remote corner of Cartaginensis, Athanagild had presented a problem to the catholic church. Leovigild was not only the founder of a new kingdom but the necessary continuator of the religious dualism practised by the Ostrogoths. St Isidore refers to Athanagild's campaigns against the Byzantines without giving precise dates. He notes that the struggle against the Greeks continued 'until now', the date of his history of the Goths, or 619, and is opposed to the Greek intrusion. Leovigild was appointed as a commander and began his career by devastating Bastetania and taking the port of Málaga. John of Biclaro places the death of Athanagild and succession of Liuva in 548 and the death of Liuva and succession of all Spain by Leovigild in 573, dating Leovigild's marriage and reign from 569, giving his victories in Bastetania and Málaga under 570.⁸⁶ He added to his glory by taking Sidonia in 571: it was betrayed by one Framidaneus under cover of night, the Greek *milites* then being slaughtered.

His great feat was the conquest of Cordova, again by a night attack, and followed by the slaughter of 'a multitude of rustics'. The Greeks lost their capital, which possessed a fortified residence as the seat of their governor. Leovigild thus attained the height of his power in 572. He owed something to the failures of the Emperor Justin II (565-578), whose armies suffered three defeats in Africa, where the Moors and Libyans killed the Byzantine prefect in 569 and two successive magistri in 570 and 571. It was only when Justin was found mad and replaced by his commander Tiberius II (578-582) who conferred the titles of Caesar and Augustus on his son-in-law Maurice (582-602) that things began to improve.

Leovigild was sufficiently powerful to uphold the dualism imposed by the Ostrogoths, while in Further Spain the church of St Martin expanded rapidly. In 561 the Suevic king Theodemir convened the First Council of Braga, attended by eight bishops, of whom the senior was Lucretius, followed by Andreas of Iría and Martin of Dume: one was Malioc or Maliosus, the bishop-abbot of the Britons of the Monastery of Maximus at Mondoñedo. This, like Iría, was beyond the *conventus* assigned to the Sueves: they may have included representatives of the dioceses south of the Douro or of Tuy. When King Theodemir died in 570, he was succeeded by St Martin's pupil Miro. Martin's mission was to restore Roman Gallaecia. This is understood by Gregory of Tours and by the Italian-born poet Venantius Fortunatus, who hailed him as 'Gallisueva salus'. At Braga II in 572, St Martin was metropolitan and received twelve bishops,

Oporto, Tuy, Lamego, Viseu, Conimbriga (Condeixa) and Egítania (Idanha) in Suevic possession, and Lugo, Ourense, Iría, the Britones and Astorga, which fell outside the realm of the Sueves. The anomaly was resolved by making Lugo a metropolitan see.⁸⁷

The unique *Parochiale* divides the dioceses into *ecclesiae*, and adds in the case of Braga, Oporto and Tuy a number of *pagi*. Despite many attempts, many of these cannot now be certainly identified. Few of the toponyms are demonstrably Germanic and may reflect the survival of ancient tribestads or mixed societies.⁸⁸ St Martin was a Pannonian and his formation was in the East where monasticism was general. Spanish bishops sometimes regarded it as invasive of their privileges and possibly contrary to the obedience they sought to impose. Under the influence of the Desert Fathers, he founded isolated hermitages and monasteries now forgotten.⁸⁹

The Visigothic settlements on the middle Douro extended as far as Toro, or Villa Gothorum. John of Biclaro follows Leovigild's conquest of Cordova with a campaign by Miro against the Runcones, not certainly identified.⁹⁰ This was followed by Leovigild's first campaign in the north in 573, against Sabaria, - not Ptolemy's Sarabis Vaccaeorum, which was too far south, but rather Sabaria in Bragança.⁹¹ Leovigild's were predatory raids in which plunder was an abiding motive. Toledo was not a rich city, and he required resources for his buildings and wars. He deprived local elders of their accumulated gold, mined in the auriferous belt of the north-west, much depleted in the second century. He then invaded Cantabria, took Amaia, seized its wealth and made it his province. This was the event that San Millán, who preached to the Cantabrians, warned their senate of unless they amended their ways. In 575 Leovigild entered the Aregensian Hills, the Montes de León or Bragança, capturing its lord Aspidius and his family and laying hold of their treasure. In 576 he marched against Suevic Gallaecia, where King Miro sued for peace and was granted it for a limited period.

Leovigild's progress in the north-west was halted by the recovery of the empire with Tiberius, though its affairs in Italy suffered from the rise of the Lombards in the north. Nearer home, the Catholics of Mérida were strengthened by the consecration of Bishop Mausona.⁹² There is no doubt of the orthodoxy of the city. The Greeks Paul and Fidelis had endowed the shrine of St Eulalia with splendour: the *VPE* says they had made it the wealthiest see in the Spains. Leovigild could not afford to ignore the place where Agila had met his end. In 573 his efforts to impose an Arian bishop Sunna were conducted by a young *comes* Witteric. The author of the *VPE* was convinced that Leovigild wanted to steal the tunic of St Eulalia for his church in Toledo. The cost of his campaigns also increased. In 577 he returned to the south to occupy the mountainous region between Baetica and Cartaginensis known as Oróspeda, where he crushed the 'rebellious rustics'. He is said to have attacked Cartagena, which was now being fortified as the capital of what remained of Byzantine Spain. At least, the region was laid waste. The Emperor Tiberius restored Greek power in Africa, but used his wealth to bring the Lombards of Italy under control. He did not intervene militarily but received a delegation from the Frank Chilperic, which he kept for some time before sending them back in 581 with a gilt bust of himself as 'the glory of the Romans'. The effect of this was to bring Brunhild's son, the young Childebert II, to his camp rather than that of Guntram of Orleans.

There was nothing stable about the four Merovingian kingdoms. Brunhild had accepted the Roman religion, but remained a Visigoth by birth to whom much of Aquitania had been assigned as her portion. Her husband Sigisbert had received Rheims, but on his early death his half-brother Chilperic, the murderer of her sister, had sent his son Merovic to seize Poitiers. Merovic had then taken Poitiers and married Brunhild, but his ferocious father pursued him and killed him near Rheims. Brunhild was held for a time with two daughters in the convent of Meaux near Paris, while Chilperic claimed the parts of Aquitania assigned to her murdered sister. Brunhild hoped for the protection of Leovigild and his wife, her mother, and sent the bishop of Chalons-sur-Marne on her affairs to Spain, where he died.

The only alternative to the domination of Chilperic was his elder half-brother Guntram of Orleans, who, while less formidable than Chilperic, had the ear of Gregory of Tours. He would claim to be the protector of his young nephew Childebert, now won over by Chilperic, and of Brunhild. The Suevic King Miro, probably after the death of St Martin in March 579, sent a mission to seek the friendship of Guntram: it was arrested at Poitiers, on instructions from Chilperic, and detained in Paris for a year before being released. Meanwhile, Leovigild's negotiations with Brunhild continued and led to the marriage of his elder son, Hermenegild, to Brunhild's daughter Ingundis, who was very young. The pair were well received by Leovigild and her grandmother Godeswinth and sent off to govern Seville. There Hermenegild, under the influence of Bishop Leander, embraced catholicism. That a Gothic noble from Gaul should become a convert was not unusual, but Hermenegild was heir to the throne in Toledo.⁹³ If Leovigild hoped to conciliate his catholic subjects, he ran a considerable risk, but at Mérida he had taken a strong line in exiling the redoubtable Bishop Mausona. He also built Reccopolis, which he named after his second son Reccared, to control the road from Cartagena to Toledo. The author of *VPE*, while disclaiming personal knowledge of Leovigild, 'long ago in the time of our forebears', noted that, though not of the true faith, he had behaved correctly in the case of the murderers of a monk, but he had become ruled by a vile serpent that possessed his inmost soul and caused him to send many messages to Mausona bidding him to become an Arian. When Mausona spurned his offers, they were followed by threats and the appointment of Sunna, a depraved and foul-mouthed liar of horrible and hateful aspect, etc., etc. Sunna took over certain sanctuaries and, in the face of general opposition, wrote to Leovigild to suggest that he take over the whole diocese. Leovigild exiled Mausona, whose duties were performed by a priest named John. In a similar vein, Gregory asserts that Queen Godeswinth turned against her grand-daughter and attempted to compel her by physical violence to become an Arian, including having her thrown into the baptismal pool. Leovigild responded to the crisis by calling the Arian bishops to a synod at Toledo. It decided to remove the difference in the method of baptism. This John of Biclaro represents as a device to coerce catholic prelates to embrace Arianism. If so, the only known defector was Vincentius of Saragossa.

John of Biclaro places under 585 Leovigild's conquest of the Suevic kingdom. He had summoned Hermenegild to Toledo, and when the prince refused to appear, declared him a rebel against paternal authority. Hermenegild had resources in the south, and Leovigild, after occupying Italica, was limited to restoring it and awaiting reinforcements by sea from Gothic Gaul. Hermenegild appealed to the catholic king of the Sueves and to the emperor, but was unable to save Seville and fled with Ingundis and their baby Athanagild to Cordova. He had

issued gold *trientes* at Seville in his own name with the legend 'a Deo Vita', he owed his life not to Leovigild but to a higher power. At Cordova he was captured and placed under the guard of one Sisbert, who took him to Valencia. Leovigild marked his victory with a coin saying 'Corduba bis optinuit': he had won Cordova a second time. The only ruler to respond was Miro, who left with an army, but was too late, he turned back, and died, perhaps killed by his own men.⁹⁴

Eboric or Euric was the legal heir to Miro, married to Siguntha. In 585, he was overthrown by one Audeca, the last king of the Sueves, who had the young king tonsured and married Siguntha to legitimize himself. It was not therefore to punish Miro for his intervention, but rather to remove an illegitimate ruler that Leovigild invaded the kingdom of the Sueves.⁹⁵ No new ruler was appointed for the Sueves, but Biclario records that in 585 one Malaric rebelled and pretended to be king, but was suppressed by Leovigild's *duces* and sent to him in chains. There was a limited revival of Arianism among Visigothic garrisons but the church of St Martin survived, as did pockets of pagans in Galicia. The Arians in the Spains passed from being a minority to becoming an even smaller minority. Leovigild's heir was now without dispute his younger son Reccared. When the Franks made an attempt to seize Narbonensis, they were resisted by Reccared, who proved himself as his father's successor. The invasion perhaps provided a pretext for the execution of Hermenegild at the hands of his keeper Sisbert. In some places he was considered a Christian martyr, but in most of Spain he remained a rebel who had defied his father.

The Merovingian kings rarely left northern Gaul. For Gregory of Tours, the rivalry of Guntram and Childebert was confused for a time by the appearance of Gundovald, who came from the East and claimed to be the long-lost brother of Chilperic: he occupied Bordeaux and other places and was killed at Comminges in Gascony. Most of the fighting was between the governors of the cities of Aquitania. The claims of Galswinth had passed to Chilperic and on his death to her rival Fredegund, who may have been as vicious as Gregory paints her. Guntram, himself childless, made Childebert II his heir, but could rarely count on the loyalty of his clients. He ordered an invasion of Gothic Gaul, using men from the north and from the towns of Aquitania and Burgundy. They entered Carcassonne, but when their leader was killed, fled, abandoning their loot. They ravaged the country of Nîmes.

Leovigild died a natural death at Toledo in April 586. He had been ill and Gregory says that he became a catholic on his deathbed. Pope Gregory says only that he regretted the death of Hermenegild and had feared to become a catholic because of the effect it would have on his people. Reccared was at Toledo and succeeded without difficulty; he had been betrothed to Rigunth, daughter of Chilperic, who began her journey from Paris to Toulouse. There she learned of her father's assassination and was robbed of her possessions and stranded. Her mother was the widow Fredegund, whose infant son was Lothar II. Since many of his lieges and perhaps bishops recognized the pretender Gundovald, she sought an alliance with Guntram. Leovigild's relations with Guntram had been soured by the fate of Ingundis. His ships seized Frankish vessels sailing to supply the Sueves. Guntram did not himself visit Aquitania but left the command to Desiderius, *dux* in Bordeaux, who seized Toulouse and the treasure of Rigunth. It was he who invaded Carcassonne, where he was ambushed and killed.

Reccared had proved his capacity to defend Gothic Gaul. His stepmother Godeswinth was the mother of Brunhild, the mother of Childebert II and still loyal to her Visigothic birthplace. Reccared sent envoys to Mâcon to negotiate. It thus came about that the Arian queen-dowager Godeswinth and her supporters joined with Reccared against Guntram, who had made no response to Reccared's mission. His engagement to Rigunth having failed, she became a turbulent inhabitant of the Frankish convent at Poitiers. Late in 586 Reccared went to Gothic Gaul and raided Frankish territory, while Guntram appointed successors to Desiderius to oppose him. Bicláro places Reccared's decision to embrace catholicism in the tenth month of his reign, or the spring of 587, associating it with the decision to execute Sisbert who had executed his brother. He adds that Reccared restored the churches and convents that had been sequestered from the catholics, which included the reinstatement of Mausona at Mérida. In 588 the annalist gives nothing but the punishment of two rebels, one of them Bishop Sunna, who was exiled, and the other Segga, deprived of his hands before being exiled to Gallaecia.

When Reccared had called the bishops together for a debate, which he declared the catholics to have won, he again sent envoys to Guntram and Childebert to propose a settlement. But in Septimania the Arian bishop Athaloc, together with two *comites* Granista and Wildgern, resisted the conversion. Reccared disclaimed any responsibility for the fate of Ingundis, and found Childebert cordial, though he hesitated to defy his uncle Guntram, whose heir he was. Reccared's envoys suggested a marriage with Childebert's sister, to which both Brunhild and Childebert agreed provided that Guntram approved. This was the context of the Treaty of Andelot drawn up by Gregory of Tours and Felix of Chalons. By this Guntram would protect Brunhild and her daughter and take charge of Bordeaux and the rest of the dowry of Brunhild's murdered sister, and Childebert II would have Tours, Poitiers and other places. After the agreement, Felix revealed that Reccared had asked for Childebert's sister, and Guntram refused his consent. This in effect offered Guntram all Aquitania and the domains of Childebert, should the latter die first. Brunhild was left with only the possession of Cahors, and Chilperic's widow Fredegund and her baby son Lothar were excluded. Gregory of Tours had taken the lead and skilfully satisfied Guntram with only a sop to Brunhild. Childebert and Fredegund took the Emperor Maurice's gold for a campaign against the Lombards in Italy, who sued for peace with a marriage to Childebert's sister. He failed to crush the Arian Lombards but refused to return the emperor's gold. There was thus no marriage alliance for Reccared in Gaul.

His catholic *dux*, Claudius of Lusitania, heavily defeated the Franks when they attacked Septimania from Toulouse. Bicláro says that Claudius put 360,000 Franks to flight near Carcassonne, giving the year as 589. It was this success that enabled Reccared to announce the conversion of the Visigoths to catholicism at Toledo (III) in May 589. A majority of the Arian bishops and leaders submitted, even if their rank and file remained unconvinced. The event sets the stage for the monarchy of Toledo, which dominated almost the whole of the Spains during the following century.

Toledo III was convened by Reccared, who married Baddo, a Goth, his glorious queen, perhaps related to a *comes* who had served in Gaul. For the church it completed the lengthy process begun 265 years before at Nicaea and brought to a successful conclusion by St Leander of

Seville with Eutropius, abbot of the monastery of Servitanus, and 'the synod of all Spain, (Gothic) Gaul and Gallaecia', 66 bishops (Biclaro says 72 prelates), meeting in the Royal City, and representatives of the whole people of the Goths and the 'infinite multitude' of the Suevic people. Those who renounced and condemned Arianism were eight bishops including those of Valencia, Tortosa, Lugo, Tuy, Oporto and Viseu, and unnamed priests and deacons. For Biclaro the triumphant note is muted by the *dux* Argimund, a chamberlain of Reccared whose plot was betrayed: his accomplices were killed and he was whipped, shorn, deprived of his right hand and paraded through the streets of Toledo on an ass, 'to teach servants not to be arrogant towards their lords'. The king's stepmother Godeswinth had been involved in an attempt by a bishop Uldila or Uldida a year before and did not give further trouble. Apart from the royal family, there were five *proceres*, nobles, named as Gugginus, Fonsa, Afrila, Aica and Ella.

General councils of the church were a rare occurrence, but it was prescribed that metropolitans should call provincial councils of their bishops regularly: it was scarcely then foreseen that councils of Toledo would come to number fourteen in the seventh century. The eight bishops of Gothic Gaul met at Narbonne in November: the canons have been preserved and show that all, free or servile, Goths, Romans, Syrians, Greeks or Jews, must observe Sunday by not working or travelling: if they travelled, they would pay a penalty to the *comes* of the city, six *solidi* for the free or a hundred lashes for serfs. No one might celebrate the fifth day for Jove with dances. At Seville, Leander summoned the eight bishops of Baetica in 590, and the dozen bishops of Tarraconensis met at Saragossa in November 592: they allowed those who had been Arians to retain their former positions. In Cartaginensis, there was the difficulty that Cartagena was in the hands of the Greeks, and Toledo was only one of a dozen suffragans, and some parishes had been wholly Arian. It was only in June 597 that a provincial council with fifteen prelates, including the metropolitans of Mérida and Narbonne, assembled at Toledo: it enacted that parishes unable to afford a priest should be kept extant by a lay clerk. A meeting at Huesca has left no written record: proceedings of provincial councils are rarely preserved. A long interval ensued before St Isidore was able to convene Toledo IV in 633. The Greek church, while accepting the conversion of the Gothic rulers, did not reconcile itself to the customs of those it regarded as unregenerate barbarians or rabble.

6

TOLEDO AND ST ISIDORE

Toledo stands on a mount now crowned by its Alcázar and surrounded on three sides by a loop of the Tagus, here confined by a deep ravine. It was the forum of the Oretani or Carpetani, who used the flatter land where the river was crossed. To the Romans, its feature was its equidistance from more notable cities at a cross-roads important for the movement of troops. They had endowed it with an aqueduct far less grand than that at Segovia due north of it. On the north side it had a circus nearly a quarter of a mile long. There were also temples and a theatre or amphitheatre, now barely distinguishable. It is supposed that iron was founded, for later it became famous for swords. The Christian church used its central position for the Councils of 400 and 507. Its patron saint was Leocadia, whose passion tells little except that she suffered under Dacian: she was perhaps the tutelary of a popular basilica 'in suburbio Toletano'. Reccared built or rebuilt the churches of St Mary and of the Apostles St Peter and St Paul: the latter, supposedly for relics sent from Rome, is first named in 597. It is referred to as pretorian, the royal chapel or that for the royal guard. The city has been so much rebuilt by later generations that it is hard to discern its Visigothic vestiges. There was plenty of Roman stone available. The metropolitan Eugenius II refers to its splendour and its decorations in full Byzantine fashion, but that was fifty years later. An inscription says that its walls were rebuilt or built by Wamba: the words are preserved in a text with no indication of where it was placed.

Toledo had its monastery, Agalia, outside the city, founded by Helladius, *comes* and minister for public affairs under Reccared until he took the habit and performed the menial tasks of a monk, becoming abbot and bishop: he died in 633. His name is not Germanic but Hellenistic. The Goths were not by tradition urbanists, and there were estates in the vicinity, forerunners of the famous *Cigarrales*. Names were important to the Goths, who were willing to absorb aliens, provided that they themselves governed. The church preferred Roman names, so long as they did not recall pagan times: the first bishop of Rome to change his name on his accession was John II (532-535) who had been a parish priest as Mercurius: since then the custom became usual. Biblical names afforded some common ground, but true Goths clung to their own baptismal names.

The first metropolitan to bear a Germanic name was Ildefonsus (657-667) who composed a *De viris illustribus* as a sequel to those of St Isidore. But the unusual name of Braulio, metropolitan of Saragossa (631-653), appears Germanic.⁹⁶



Toledo, medieval fortifications rebuilt on Visigothic foundations.

When in 633 Toledo IV approved the law that the ruler must be of pure Gothic descent and of legitimate birth, it was ratifying what was already the general practice. Those who had Roman names might command and enter the palatine class, but they could not expect to rule. The king must also be of 'perfect age,' an undefined quantity, which meant ability to command, and even more to enforce his decisions. Marriage, with a male heir, was desirable. This suited kings, who might look forward to a dynastic succession: a powerful king might enforce the succession of a son by 'associating' him, but in an age when the expectation of life was short, no ruler was followed by a son and a grandson. If the parentage of a king became important, so was his choice of a legal wife. To speak of a ruling class would be to beg too many questions. The Gothic concept that deeds make nobles and nobles make kings was modified but not abandoned. There was a palatine order, who included *comites* and *duces*, though *proceres* might be neither. In imperial times, the *comes* had been the ruler's man of confidence, entrusted with some special mission and authority. Reccared's intimates were much the same. *Dux* meant a leader or commander who might not yet be so eminent.

Claudius, whose victory ensured Reccared's succession, was a *dux*, but not apparently *comes*, neither was Argimund, a *cubicularius* or chamberlain but a rebel. Claudius was *dux* of the city of Mérida or of its province, Lusitania. Later, the ranks were transposed: there was a *comes toletanus* for the capital, and other cities had the same. Each province came to have its *dux*, and some were *comes et dux*.⁹⁷ Such tables as exist (for the second half of the century) show that the *dux* was then the superior. There were more *duces* than provinces, some perhaps attached to the court. After Helladius, the minister for public affairs was Sisiclus, who attended St Isidore's synod at Seville in 619 accompanied by Swanila, minister of the fisc. Both were *illustres* and *comites*, but St Isidore, being himself an expert in Roman law, prefers the classical style of *rector*. Although most of the palatine order were Goths, and probably not literate, a few of the offices required the ability to read and write, such as the notary or royal secretary and the treasurer, who often bore non-Germanic names. The Sueves, more Romanized by several generations, annexed but not absorbed, were administered *per duces*, but the church of St Martin remained relatively intact.

Roman society had three conditions: free, freedmen and servile. Goths regarded themselves as free, and degradation and subjection to corporal punishment as the greatest disgrace. They distinguished *seniores* from *mediocres* (pronounced and written *mediogres*), who were at least twice as numerous. Thiudis had had his private force of two thousand men: perhaps his successor who bore the diminutive Thiudisclus as his name was his *vicarius*, who might be equated to the *thiufad*, originally commander of a thousand, a word found in medieval Leon, if only because perpetuated by the laws of the Visigoths. Bodyguards were *gardingi*, who only later found their way into the palatine order. Bishops nominated *numerarii*, or collectors of tribute. At a later date, the metropolitan of Mérida obliged one Theodemund, a swordsman or *spatarius*, to become a collector, an act held to be an offence to his rank and descent. The servile class is recorded only in a passive and proletarian capacity.⁹⁸

Reccared owed his crown to his powerful and rapacious father and his catholic mother. His conversion was as much an act of policy as of piety. He had proved himself against the Franks, and both pope and emperor had saluted him, but he had the Greeks in Cartagena and was himself in possession of Gothic Gaul with Franks and Burgundians as uncomfortable neighbours. His reign was less than half the length of his father's and he was not a famous warrior. He was wealthy: his father had minted gold *trientes* in his own name with a schematic effigy at nineteen mints: under Reccared the total was 36, with an increase of seven in Lusitania and nine in Gallaecia. Many of these last were very small places represented by very few specimens: they disappear after 630 and were from remoter or still unconquered communities not now clearly identifiable. All kings minted coin at Toledo with the epithet *pius* or *iustus* or, less frequently, *victor*. The last indicates a military success and falls into disuse from about 650 to 690: it is rare among these transitory mints and its absence might imply annexation rather than royal conquest. In the Suevic kingdom, the so-called Suevic *trientes*, not minted at Braga but at catholic towns or tribesteads which had thrown in their lot with St Martin and King Miro, disappear.⁹⁹

Reccared died in December 601 at Toledo, and was succeeded by his young son Liuva II. It may have seemed a success for dynasticism, but Liuva had not reached the 'perfect age'.¹⁰⁰ Coins were issued in his name from ten mints, including the metropolitan cities except

Narbonne, always the sole mint for Gothic Gaul. He had reigned for little more than a year, when Witteric, the *comes* of Leovigild at Mérida, rebelled against him. He was disqualified by having a hand cut off and perhaps executed. If the church had hoped to establish primogeniture, Gothic generals would not obey an unseasoned ruler who could not enforce his decisions: the problem remained unsolved and became a sufficient cause for the fall of the Gothic monarchy to the Muslims. Although Witteric was denounced for Arianism, his object was rather to return to the dualism practised by Leovigild. His coins were legal and marked *pius* or *iustus*. His reign is dated from 603. He was assassinated at a feast, and replaced by Gundemar, an elderly *dux* from Septimania.

No synod of the church is recorded between that of Barcelona in 599 and Egara in 614, if only because a national council required the royal assent. It had taken the penitent Arians into its bosom, but was not yet in marching order. There were churches and communities left without clergy, and dioceses (Barcelona, Lugo) with bishops who were former Arians, and some (Valencia) with two bishops in one diocese. Seville was the great seat of classical learning and of legal and theological studies. Its metropolitan and head of the church in 589, was St Leander, whose family were refugees from Cartagena and strongly opposed to the Greeks. Seniority among bishops was important in the provinces. Mausona of Mérida had perhaps suffered most, but was not senior. Toledo was not officially the capital, but the remotest part of Cartaginensis, whose city was in Greek hands. At the council of 589 Abbot Donatus of Servitania was prominent after Leander. His monastery had been founded on the coast of Valencia by refugees from North Africa. Abbots were not yet normally summoned to national councils, though the church of St Martin at Braga was monastic and preserved the traditions of the Desert Fathers. Toledo had influential abbots, and owed its eminence to the presence of the Gothic kings, who yielded nothing of their practice of appointing their own bishops. If Leander had thought that a catholic and Gothic king in Toledo would forgo this right, he was mistaken, and if he thought that male primogeniture would guarantee good relations between church and state he was doubly mistaken.

In October 610 King Gundemar convened fifteen bishops of Cartaginensis, excluding Cartagena, and asserted the metropolitan status of Toledo. The meeting was not national but its purpose was not merely provincial.¹⁰¹ Subjoined to it are three 'suggestions'; one Sisuldus proposed that Emila be made bishop, and a Sunila asked that the king appoint him, being of illustrious family, to Mentesa: Hermenegild asked the king to name Emila instead of John, or if prevented by '*occasio seculi*', someone else at his pleasure. All this was perhaps not very pleasing to Seville, where St Isidore, the successor to Leander, says of Gundemar's short reign only that he ravaged the Vascones in one campaign and fought another against the Greeks. The only other source is the letters in barbarous Latin of a *comes* Bulgarus. He expresses profound commiseration on the death of the glorious Queen Hildoare. He shows that he had been out of favour and in letters to the bishops of Braga and Narbonne was grateful for their support: he had been liberated by the death of Witteric. Gundemar himself died a natural death at Toledo probably in February–March 612. The names given might suggest that Bulgar was a Sueve from Braga serving in Gothic Gaul.

Two more letters to unnamed bishops throw some light on relations with the Franks. After the death of Gregory of Tours in 594, there is no narrative until Fredegar, a composite work

put together in Burgundy in about 660. Whereas Gregory preserves the ecclesiastical gossip of his day, Fredegar gives rather less racily the lay gossip of his court. Childebert had left Burgundy to his son Theuderic (595-613) and Austrasia to Theudibert (595-612), King Gundemar had sent subsidies by the writer Bulgar to Theudibert for his war on the pagan Avars, but Bulgar had received the disquieting report that Brunhild conspired with the Burgundian ruler and so favoured the barbarians. He wrote to ask if the subsidies had been received. They had not, for Theuderic had arrested the envoys at Irupinae (?). Bulgar retorted by seizing the towns of Juvignac and Corneilhan (Hérault) which Reccared had ceded to Brunhild, and would hold them until Gundemar's envoys were released and compensated.¹⁰²

Guntram of Orleans had the hope of reuniting the four Merovingian kingdoms, and on dying with no surviving son in 593, bequeathed his possessions to his nephew Childebert, son of Brunhild: he died in 595. Guntram had protected and cheated Brunhild, who alone maintained the illusion of an alliance between Visigoths and Franks. Her bitter enemy was Fredegund, the mistress of Chilperic and later his queen, who died in 597, leaving her ambitions and hatred to her son Lothar II, who finally brought about the reunion, subjecting Brunhild to a hideous death in 613. Lothar's son Dagobert had the credit for uniting the Merovingian kingdoms, which soon fell into the hands of rulers who reigned without governing: the Carolingians had long exercised authority when the last Merovingian was deposed with the consent of the pope in 751.

Nothing is known of any family Gundemar may have had.¹⁰³ Gundemar's ability to provide subsidies may be suggested by the fact that in his brief reign he issued coin of regular purity from as many mints as Witteric, though none are known from Narbonne. He was succeeded by Sisebut (612-February 621). Sisebut was educated in the bosom of the church, to which he gave an illegitimate son Thiudila as a monk. He is the only Visigothic king to be a writer, with works in both prose and verse. St Isidore, who succeeded Leander in about 600 and governed the church of Seville for nearly forty years, thought him almost an ideal monarch. He dedicated his *De Natura rerum* and a version of the *Etymologies* to the king, and probably meant his history of the Goths for him, though it was finished only after Sisebut's death. The king was clear in speech, wise in his opinions and capable in letters. His fault was that he interpreted the laws against Judaism too severely, since the church required that they be persuaded not coerced. In military matters, he was successful in putting down the rebel Asturians through his *dux* Ricchila and the Roccones also *per duces*. He was twice successful against the Roman Greeks, and showed himself merciful in paying the ransom of captives.

Sisebut was not himself a commander in the field, but sent his *duces* Ricchila and Swinthila against the Vascones and Asturians.¹⁰⁴ Whether his fame as a man of letters is also vicarious seems possible. If his hexameters on the eclipses of the sun and moon are correct, this may be because the monks of Toledo studied Latin prosody as a necessary preparation for singing in Latin, the precentor being next in rank to the bishop.¹⁰⁵ If his prose seems pompous it was probably what was to be expected for courtly style. It is surprising that he should have chosen, or have been chosen, to write a *vita* of St Desiderius or Didier, a recent French martyr, who was bishop of Vienne in 601 and stoned to death by a mob in 603. Why the king should have picked this subject remains hidden. Gaul was rather lacking in martyrs, while most Peninsular cities could lay claim to at least one, and Saragossa to a whole band.¹⁰⁶ Desiderius

was made bishop because of his exemplary life. He was accused of rape by a lady called Justa, and found guilty by Theuderic of Burgundy and Brunhild, who is demonized as a wicked woman. Sisebut does not go so far, but is in line with Fredegar's assertion in his ch. 42 that she caused the death of ten Frankish kings. The legend that blames her for the continued separation of the Merovingian kingdoms has much more to do with Frankish feuding than with history. Gregory, who had died in 594, is not unkind to Brunhild, and Fredegar's lack of objectivity well-known.¹⁰⁷ But this does not solve the question of why Sisebut participated in the campaign of denigration in such a blatant way. It may demonstrate a wish to bury the hatchet between Goths and Franks, or even beyond this a hope in the church that the ancient western prefecture might be resuscitated.¹⁰⁸

St Isidore is with little doubt the great man of his age, c. 560–636. He is said to have been the brother of his predecessor at Seville, Leander, who was fully fifteen years his senior and the son of Severianus, governor of Cartaginensis, who fled from the Greeks with his family.¹⁰⁹ He was even more distrustful of the Greeks, and had some Gothic blood, looking forward to a new society in which Roman culture would combine with Gothic strength. His many works embrace both classical and Christian learning, and in his *Etymologies* he attempts to distil the essence of everything Roman. He gained in both wisdom and esteem from the very length of his ministry. Seville was the seat of both classical and religious studies, and it is his training in Roman law that permeates his first synod or council at Seville in 619, attended by nine of the ten bishops of the diocese and two *illustres* of Sisebut's court. He plunged into Roman law to settle the case of Theodulf of Málaga, who complained that his diocese had been despoiled in the wars (of Leovigild) in favour of Écija, Elvira and Cabra. All things must be settled by the law of postliminy without regard for negative prescription. Fulgentius of Écija and Honorius of Cordova disputed a basilica which might have been in Celticensis or in Reginensis. If the church fell in either ancient territory, it belonged always to that territory and could not be usurped: if this proved unascertainable, it belonged to the present owner. If the legal frontier did not include the site of the church, the plaintiff failed, but if it had been held unjustly, even for thirty years, the church went to the plaintiff. Next, the bishop of Italica claimed that a *colonus*, a cleric, had gone over to Cordova. If the individual was a *colonus* he must be returned, since civil law ruled that a *colonus* was bound to his birthplace.¹¹⁰

King Sisebut did not recover Cartagena from the Greeks, but waged two campaigns which took captives whom he released. The Emperor Heraclian (610–641) had to contend with the Persians and others. Four letters exchanged between the Greek patrician Cesarius and Sisebut show that both sides were prepared to negotiate. Cesarius had asked for peace, the emperor was informed and Sisebut was in agreement, but nothing was concluded in writing.

Sisebut died in February 621 and was succeeded by his son Reccared II, whose reign lasted only two weeks. Isidore says that Sisebut died a natural death, though some said he was given poison. Fredegar and others re-echo Isidore's praise of the late king. Nothing is added about the brief reign of Reccared II.¹¹¹ The successor was Swinthila, *dux* and husband of Reccared II's sister: it seems therefore that the young king did not meet the requirements of Gothic custom. The solution was at least dynastic. Isidore says that Swinthila was elected by divine grace. His immediate task was to recover Cartagena by forcing the issue. The precise date of the surrender is not recorded. It enabled Isidore to say in his history of the Goths that

Swinthila was the first king to rule all Spain under a single sceptre. In fact, the Byzantines still held a small and distant post, probably at or near Mértola. In his often quoted eulogy of Spain Isidore made her the queen of all provinces from the western Ocean to the Indus, enumerating her qualities and wealth of all kinds and indulging in a venture into mythology with the wish that the fecundity of the Goths might long prevail. His retrospective passion for the past was tempered by a commitment to Rome rather than the Greek East, where the primacy of the papacy was challenged by assertions of equality for the patriarch of Constantinople. Gregory I had opposed any such claim, but the Eastern bishops had temporized on the question of the divine nature and Heraclian had accepted the revision of the Monothelites, which Pope Honorius had ignored.

Swinthila's conquest was followed by the devastation of the port and adjacent district and a barbaric slaughter of the defeated. There could no longer be any question of a revival or of a rival to Toledo as metropolitan of Cartaginensis. In his history, Isidore accords lavish praise on Swinthila for his campaign against the Ruccones, an invasion by the Vascones, his foundation of Olite, and his qualities of faith, prudence, persistence and munificence. His son Riccimer was his worthy associate.¹¹² But by 631, the prospect of a hereditary succession had faded and was dashed by the rebellion of the *dux* of Septimania or Gothic Gaul. He obtained military support from the Frankish king Dagobert, who provided two companies which entered Saragossa. When Swinthila and his brother Geila approached, their army went over to the *dux* Sisnand, who was duly acclaimed at Toledo on March 26 631. The deposed ruler's life was spared. According to Fredegar, Sisnand promised Dagobert a gold bowl weighing 500 pounds for his help, but the Goths refused to part with it and redeemed it in coin. Isidore then offered his history of the Goths to Sisnand.

For Isidore and for Swinthila, the succession required that the ruler be fortified by the resources of the church and of Roman law. The church must then commit itself to intervention in secular politics. This was the context for the summoning of a general council of the church, Toledo IV, which assembled in December 633. Half a century had passed since the last, though there had been provincial gatherings of which there is no written record. Isidore, probably over seventy, was the senior metropolitan. Helladius, *comes*, monk, bishop and metropolitan of Toledo, had been consecrated in about 615, but died in 633, being succeeded by his pupil Justus, also monk and abbot of Agalia, whose reign lasted only until 636. It was Isidore who presided over the 62 bishops and seven delegates, who established the order for such assemblies. The bishops sat in a circle with the priests behind them and deacons and selected layfolk or courtiers standing behind. The necessary notaries were admitted. The king appeared in person with his magnates and displayed his humility, reading or having read his *tomus* or recommendations, after which he withdrew and the doors were closed. Nobody would leave until the session was over. At the end of the meeting, all would sign in an atmosphere of calm. After devotions, they dealt first with contentious matters, and then with ecclesiastical matters, including the fixing of the date of Easter. They expressed a preference for baptism by single rather than triple immersion in order to avoid confusion with the practice of heretics. They finally signed 75 canons.

The rules adopted for promulgation as law by the king move towards the secular. Bishops are to be elected by clergy and people, they are not to communicate abroad without informing the

king, and not to serve as royal judges unless the king undertakes not to apply the death sentence. Several canons restate the attitude of the church towards Judaism and the disabilities imposed on Jews. The church then hedged the monarch with its guarantees. He should always be a Goth appointed by the magnates and the bishops. Usurpation, attempts at rebellion and conspiracies against his life were prohibited under pain of solemn anathema. Swinthila, his brother Geila and his wife and children had been unfaithful and were deprived of their rank and possessions except such as the king chose to grant them. The number of bishops and delegates, 69, was almost the most complete recorded. All the metropolitans were present, and there was nobody from Cartagena. The church was thus committed to participate in affairs of state. Since the election of a king took place immediately on the death of his predecessor, those magnates and bishops not within call did not share in the process. There was no formal adoption of primogeniture or of its limitations. Instead of resolving the problem of the succession, it was followed by a decade of dissensions. When Sisnand himself died in March 636, having reigned for five years, he was regarded as patient and pious, but was not followed by a son.

St Isidore died within weeks of Sisnand, and the metropolitan of Toledo Justus was removed in 636. He and most of his followers, rather than writing insufficient history, chose to write none at all. There is no narrative history of the Goths until after the kingdom of Toledo was overthrown. Its place is filled by the acts of the councils of Toledo, V to XVII, which met more often than could have been anticipated, though not at regular intervals. It became the custom to summon a council early in each reign to confirm the succession in the presence of the whole church, *ad regem confirmandum*.

Nothing is known of the antecedents of King Khintila, or of the method by which he was appointed, but he lost little time in summoning a national council, Toledo V, probably late in June 636. It was attended by only 22 bishops and two delegates, who came from the nearer provinces. They included Braulio of Saragossa, on whom the mantle of Isidore had descended. The king was attended by the *optimates* of the palace and the gathering appears to have had no purpose except to legalize the succession and to guarantee Khintila and his descendants. His *fideles* and the beneficiaries of his generosity were also protected. None were to contest the rights to property of one elected by all and approved by his Gothic nobility, nor to seek power in his lifetime, nor speak ill of him. Eighteen months later, in January 638, Khintila convened another council, Toledo V, attended by 48 bishops and two delegates. It concerned itself with a more usual agenda. It required each king to apply the laws against Judaism and asked for close examination of verdicts of death except in cases of treason. It repeated the guarantees of the royal children, but extended the classes of those disqualified to the tonsured, the servile, those Goths of bad customs and foreigners: the successor of an assassinated king must avenge him and so must all his people.

It has been supposed that the aim was to prevent the return of the clan of Swinthila. This may be. Later pardons postulate the existence of unrecorded disorders. Two coins, one from Mérida and the other from Iliberri, marked Iudila rex, are placed on stylistic grounds close to those of Swinthila or Sisnand.¹¹³ The number of known mints fell to eleven under Gundemar, but returned to 31 under Sisebut and 36 under Swinthila, a level not reached again. Sisnand had 21 known mints and Khintila 18, a decline due mainly to the disappearance of small mints in Gallaecia.

Khintila died in Toledo in December 639, and was succeeded by a young son Tulga, whose reign lasted only until April 642. He issued coin from Toledo and eleven other places, including the capitals of all the provinces except Braga, Gallaecia being represented by Lugo and Laetera. It is recorded only that he was of mild disposition. He convened no council of the church: probably the *duces* were less willing to respect him than was the church. He was finally removed by their senior member Khindaswinth, probably *dux* of Gaul or Saragossa, who in the spring of 642 marched to Pampliega, a monastery on the upper Ebro on the edge of what is now Castile.¹¹⁴ Having assured himself of the support of the Gothic mass or traditionalists, he descended on Toledo, removed Tulga and had him tonsured. There followed a ruthless suppression of all possible rivals. Fredegar heard that 200 *optimates* and 500 *de mediogribus* were slaughtered. There is no reason to accept these figures literally. Eugenius II refers to the confusion that reigned in those times in explaining why he could not find a book. Khindaswinth had plenty of confiscated property with which to reward himself and his *fideles*. In 683, Toledo XIII issued a pardon to those who had rebelled since Khintila, which may be interpreted in more than one way. The king's first order was a draconian law against treason, which required him to punish all opposition, actual or merely intentional, with death, and in the event of a pardon to blind the victim.

The Goths had now little to fear from the Franks. Dagobert died in 638 and was succeeded by his sons Clovis II and Clotar, who were unable to govern or command and paved the way for the *rois fainéants*, who did neither but served as figureheads to continue the dynasty of the Merovingians long after it had relinquished the exercise of authority. The Goths had never accepted any but a unitary state, and did not allow a child or youth to govern them. They accepted the religious authority of Rome, though their coins followed the gold standard set by Constantinople and they often dated their reigns by the Greek emperors. The Monothelite heresy, which might be considered a variant of Arianism, was condemned in Rome by Martin I in 649, but in Constantinople not until 680. The arch-heresy remained Judaism. The Roman jurists of Alaric II attempted to enforce segregation and Reccared I was deemed to have accepted Roman rules which permitted Jewish communities to keep their own laws. Neither Goths nor Franks felt strongly on the subject. At Narbonne heavy penalties were set on all for failure to observe Sunday. At Toledo the Spains depended on merchants for the luxury-trade, adorning their palaces in Greek fashion. Kings and warriors cherished semi-precious stones. Foreign merchants frequented the Mediterranean ports and the royal city. The rise of Islam posed new, if still distant, problems.

Muhammad, a contemporary of St Isidore, died in 636. When he began to teach, Arabia was divided between Christian and Jewish townships. The commerce on which they depended was at the mercy of nomads, the 'tent-Arabs' or Saracens, whose faith was animistic or none. Muhammad's object was to unite both revealed religions against 'polytheists'. His message was in poetic Arabic for oral recitation and only later set down in the Qu'ran, 'the reading'. His adherents could not afford to reject the use of weapons and some of his converts were the armed predators he most opposed. The sudden explosion of Islam took place just after his death, with the conquest of Jerusalem in 638 and of Egypt in 640. both were won by small forces, but they deprived the Eastern empire of half of its area when the emperors were mainly concerned with the Persians. If the expansion of Islam was astonishing, the existence of Muhammad should not have been. The disruption of trade affected Syrians and Jews, who

were numerous in the cosmopolitan city of Alexandria, the focus of commerce with the ports of Mediterranean Spain. Since Islam lacked documents and a written history, theologians did not know what to make of it. Muhammad disclaimed divinity for himself, though he accepted Jesus as a prophet. He drew heavily on the Hebrew testament and was therefore classified as a Jew. As people were regularly regarded as professing the beliefs of their rulers, the merchants of Antioch and Alexandria were suspect, whatever their religion.

Among the Goths King Witteric had not enforced the rulings of Rome, but Sisebut had gone beyond the teachings by approving forcible conversion. This St Isidore considered to be *contra scientiam*. Bishop Aurasius of Toledo (d c. 615) had excommunicated the *comes* of the city Froga for having allowed converts coming out of church to be beaten by men with clubs. Froga had heeded the protests of the elders of the synagogue, who held that the catechumens had been deceived by the bishop.¹¹⁵

Apart from Toledo, the problem was most real in Baetica and especially Seville, the centre of Roman tradition, and of legal and religious studies. It contributed towards the adoption of a new code applicable to all subjects of the kings of Toledo. It was drawn up by jurists of the royal palace and, when promulgated by Khindaswinth's son in about 654, became the 'Laws of the Visigoths'. It drew on the earlier codes of Euric and Alaric, often using the term 'antiqua' to denote a law already in existence. It made the assumption that all those who used it knew Latin, or were at least sufficiently conversant to apply it. The ancient imperial law forbidding intermarriage had long since lapsed by desuetude, but when it was formally abrogated remains uncertain. The extent to which the Roman rhetorician had been replaced by ecclesiastical scribes or royal notaries is likewise difficult to establish. It seems idle to speculate to what extent the popular Latin of the Roman army, which can be glimpsed in the letters of Bulgar, had given way to more literary forms such as St Isidore knew, but it would be bold to suppose that the *duces* of the court or of the provinces were literate. It is certainly the case that in medieval Castile oral and customary law still prevailed, while in the empire of Leon this was much less so. The tradition of the oral epic which preserved tales of Gothic and heroic history continued or was revived in Castile, while in Portugal and Galicia, the Suevic areas, the tradition of poetry was, and is, lyrical and satirical.

To reverse the question and ask to what extent this implies a survival of the Gothic language is a different matter. There exists no evidence that the Bible of Ulfila was used in Aquitania or the Spains. The present splendid copy made for Theoderic the Ostrogoth was copied in Italy and acquired by a German, who presented it to the University of Uppsala, where it now has an honourable place. No document has emerged in the Gothic language or referring to it during their stay in Aquitania. The decline and disappearance of oral languages is by its very nature a subject fraught with difficulty. It may survive in a compact society such as the Visigoths in Aquitania or in isolated pockets for long periods. Germanic customs have survived longest in Castile and have been implanted in the Americas and elsewhere in a manner redolent of Gothic imperialism. The Germanic characteristics of Spanish (often called simply Castilian) are less strong in Aragonese, and much less in Catalan, which lies closer to Provençal. If French is an oral adaptation of Latin, Spanish is closer to classical, written and legal Latin. For the Goths, names were important. The *Namenbuch* of Piel and Kremer examines them in detail, but shows very clearly that their Latinized forms are often so remote



Visigothic window.

from the Germanic original as to defy explanation. Headstones which might commemorate names are either Latinized or absent. In the Suevic area there are headstones of conventional shape but no inscription whatever. Braulio, bishop of Saragossa, in a letter alludes to the difficulty of teaching boys to sing (in Latin): they may have been Basque speakers or indeed any boys. Khindaswinth may well have used spoken Gothic. A single reference speaks of his son Recceswinth (649-672) as 'learned in the barbarous language'. This comes in a medieval source some four centuries later, and if true, may refer to a knowledge of ancestral ballads rather than contemporary discourse. He was regarded as a faithful son of the church but left the command to his *dux* Wamba, whose name appears to be a nickname.

There are traces of Greek in the Latin of the times. The problem of representing Germanic sounds in Latin was not limited to the Goths. Gregory of Tours records that Chilperic (d 584) attempted to legislate w, oe, th and wi into writing, using omega, psi, zeta and delta.¹¹⁶ For the Goths the difficulties included aspirated initial, d, thorn, and initial w. Hermenegild's coins drop the H, Ermenegild. Leovigild's use vv and at times a delta. Wamba's name is with VV. Khintila always uses CH, but Khindaswinth C, CH, and often theta. Recceswinth is usually Recceswinþus. Wittiza is with VV and Roderic, Rudericus: Akhila II is Achila.¹¹⁷

Greek was the language of commerce throughout the Mediterranean area, used by Syrians, Alexandrines and others. The Greeks themselves distinguished between Romanized Goths and the traditionalists, whom they continued to regard as unredeemed barbarians. The emperors of Constantinople no longer possessed military resources to intervene, but they watched the evolution of the Gothic state not without anxiety. In earlier times Greek influence was felt in the west, where the basilica of Montelios was built to commemorate St Fructuosus of Braga, who died in 665: there are other basilicas in brick. St Martin's devotion to the Desert Fathers left indelible traces. The Greek inscriptions from Mértola are rare in the Iberian Peninsula. Eugenius' account of the fittings of the palace at Toledo evokes mercantile activities of which there are few remains. St Isidore was opposed to the Byzantines and rejoiced when Cartagena was recovered from them. In matters of finance and administration they were more expert than the Gothic *duces*. As the Greek hold over Mauritania, never strong, weakened and the court of Constantinople was racked with dissension, there were some who sought the Spains. In the time of Khindaswinth there arrived one Ardabast, who was warmly received, made *comes* and married to the king's niece, Cixilo. Their Gothicized son would become king in Toledo. When Ardabast arrived is not stated, but the marriage was presumably before the death of Khindaswinth in 653. Ardabast is not remembered to have been a military man and if he was welcomed, it was for some experience in administration or finance. Nor is it recorded whether he came as an exile from Constantinople or an administrator from Greek Africa. Ardabast does not appear to be a Greek name, it is rather Armenian or Persian. In the ninth century, when Islam had taken over Persia, some Christian Armenians sought refuge at the Byzantine court, where several Artavasdos were prominent officials.¹¹⁸

7

VISIGOTHS IN TRIUMPH

Khindaswinth was an elderly barbarian who, being a Christian, might have acted differently. Bishop Eugene, in a poem not intended for publication, makes him a monster. Fredegar, further away, gives a telling, if inexact, number of his victims and adds that the Goths would respond only to a firm yoke. To many Goths it seemed that he represented traditional claims to supremacy defended by force. The concession to primogeniture had proved unacceptable. He intended to assert himself in the face of the Roman church and was not the man to forgo the right to appoint his own metropolitan bishop. He was in no hurry to convene a council of Toledo. His gold *trientes* obey the usual standard of purity, which he could afford to maintain. He issued them from 21 mints, including all the provincial capitals, even Braga and Tuy, and six or seven small places in the north-west. He is usually called *pius*, but *iustus* at Tuy and *victor* only at Mérida, where it is possible that he met with armed resistance.¹¹⁹ His campaigns are unrecorded. Eugene II was a poet, not a historian, and it is here that the acts of the councils are deficient. When Eugene I died, Khindaswinth demanded the appointment of Eugene II, formerly a monk of the royal chapel, and then archpriest or precentor to Braulio of Saragossa (631-651), the pupil of St Isidore. Eugene did not wish to go, and Braulio told Khindaswinth that because of his own age and failing sight Eugene was indispensable to him. The king had his way, and a council of the church was held on October 18 646. Only 30 bishops and eleven others attended. Four of the metropolitans came, headed by Orontius of Mérida and Antony of Seville, both senior to Eugene; neither Braga nor Narbonne was present. The bishops did not guarantee the royal family, though they warned that no one should endanger the people of the Goths, the *patria* or the king, asking rhetorically who could be unaware of the crimes committed by tyrants and deserters who went over to the enemy, or of the disastrous arrogance that imposed ceaseless efforts on the army of the Goths, or of the madness of both laymen and, amazingly, clerics. In particular, the bishops nearer the royal city were to take turns in lending solace to the king. Hermits must spend a period in a community before being released with the consent of the abbot. The rapacity of bishops in Gallaecia was noted: they were not to exact more than two solidi a year from each basilica, or to make visitations with a company of more than fifty.

Eugene II served as metropolitan for a decade (646-657). His private denunciation of his tyrannical master suggests that little could be done to moderate the autocrat, whose legitimate son Recceswinth was brought up in the bosom of the church. Braulio, with Celsus,



Triens of Leovpgild and Triens of Égica.

dux of Tarraconsensis, and Bishop Eutropius of an unstated see, sent the king a *suggestio* that he should associate the prince, who was young and active and strong enough to endure the rigours of war. It seems possible that the youth had been entrusted to them, Saragossa having been the place from which Khindaswinth made his thrust for power. In any case, Khindaswinth heeded and from January 20 649 shared the reign with his son. Its dual nature is marked by the issue of coin showing both. Recceswinth was born long before his father seized power. An inscription composed by Eugene shows that he was married to Recceberg, who died after seven years of marriage at the age of 22 and eight months. No legitimate child is recorded by her or any other wife. As Recceswinth lived until 672, he had a long widowhood.

The dual reign lasted nearly five years, until Khindaswinth's death in November 653. The known coins of the dual reign are from only three mints, Toledo, Mérida and Seville, and are few in number.

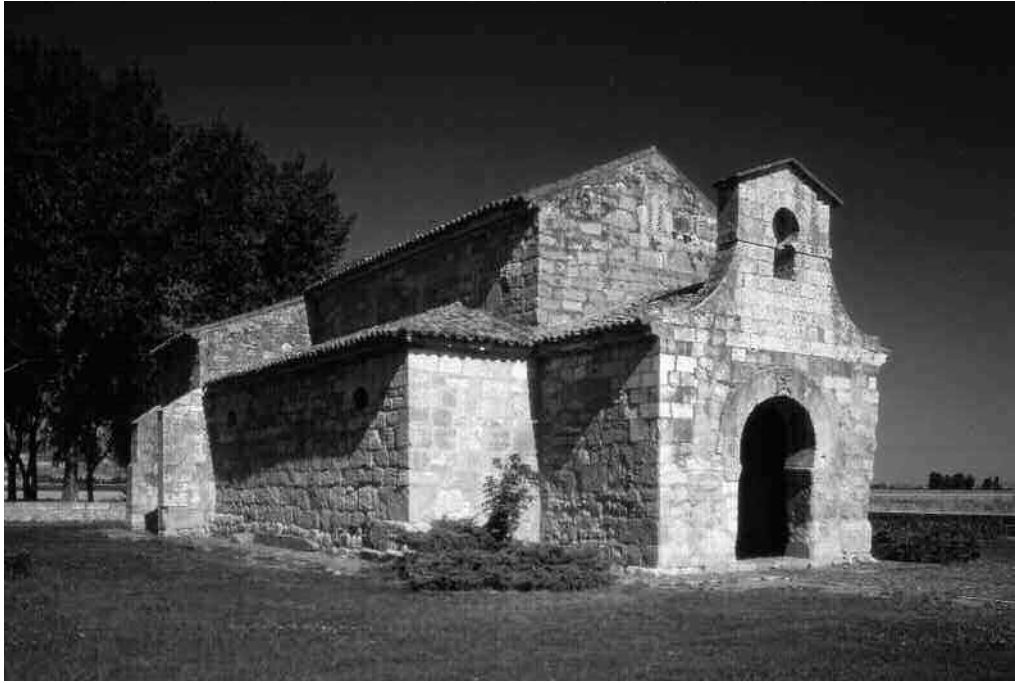
Recceswinth convened a council, Toledo VIII, on December 16 653. It was attended by four metropolitans, Narbonne being absent, 52 bishops, eleven delegates, twelve abbots and eighteen *illustres* of the palace. The prelates rejoiced in the happy day, ardently desired, and thanked the king for his long and gracious speech, in which he tempered justice with mercy, citing St Isidore on commuting death penalties to reclusion in a monastery and enforcing the laws of Sisnand on Judaism. The lay signatories are *ex viris illustribus*, not the whole palatine order. The offices show that they were the ministers, military and civil. They heard the royal speech read by, or for, the ruler, which contained his proposals for legislation. They then left, and the doors were closed for the bishops to proceed with their deliberations, taking ecclesiastical matters first and then civil or lay business. All signed the final act: it is probable that the laymen did not do this, but their names were known to the notaries. When the sessions were over, the text of laws was submitted to the palace for promulgation. While bishops came from far and near, and were expected to attend, unless impeded by old age or ill-health, in which case they must send a delegate, the laymen are predominantly those with

offices at court or those who happened to be in Toledo. In the list six are *comes et dux*. It is headed by Odoagrus or Odoacer, *comes cubiculariorum et dux*, a chamberlain with military standing. Three more have the title *comes scanciarum et dux*. There are only two non-Germanic names, one being Evantius, *comes scanciarum*, but not *dux*. In Spanish, *escanciar* remains as 'to toast', and the office may refer to a butler or dispenser, who organized the rewards of the palatine class and the economy of the household. The other non-Germanic name is Paul, *comes notariorum*, the royal secretary. There are two Requiria and Reccila called *comes patrimoniorum*, perhaps a duplication, indicating administration of the royal income. Two are called *comes spatariorum*, commanders of the guard.¹²⁰

The list is followed by a decree which notes that some kings had piled up their patrimony at the expense of the people at large. Many of the *mediocres* had been ruined with no advantage to the fisc but to the benefit of the palatine officials. All property justly acquired by Khindaswinth should pass to his son forever: the rest should be used for the good of the people, except what was justly owned by Khindaswinth before he came to the throne. Witnesses to the proper ownership of lands, vineyards and serfs should be appointed by the king.

All this is in relation to the code of the Visigoths, which was being drawn up by the palace jurists and was promulgated by Recceswinth, probably in 654. A further general council, Toledo IX, met in November 655, in the church of St Mary. It concerned itself with the behaviour of judges, who were to set an example by their conduct. It resolved points of procedure and required *conversosto* attend on feast-days with the bishop. Those present were only sixteen bishops, including Eugene II and Taio, who had succeeded Braulio, six abbots and four *illustres* of the palace, Paul, Eterius, *comes cubiculariorum*, Ella, *comes et dux*, and Recchila, *comes patrimoniorum*. They were the representatives of the group most concerned and readily available.

Yet another council, Toledo X, took place on December 1 656. It was to be the last of the reign, and was followed by a silence of twenty years, broken only by the second council of Mérida in 666. The surge of enthusiasm which had greeted Recceswinth at the beginning of his reign was now somewhat diminished. A letter by Taio, metropolitan of Saragossa since 651, shows that Recceswinth was opposed by one Froia, who had roused the wild Vascones of the Pyrenees and had inflicted much bloodshed on Christians. The rebel is not otherwise known, but might be connected with the Froga excommunicated by Bishop Aurasius of Toledo in c. 615. It does not appear that Recceswinth ever commanded his armies. All his coins are marked *pius*, not *victor* nor even *iustus*. In his later years, the command was held by his *dux* Wamba, who is first noted in 666 and was at his side when he died. Although he was remembered as a loyal son of the church, *bonimotus*, moved by the best intentions, he was also *flagitiosus*, which may mean sinful. Both his father and he left illegitimate issue. He certainly founded churches, such as the famous basilica of San Juan de Baños in the Gothic Tierra de Campos, now in Palencia, where a pious inscription was placed in his name in the thirteenth year since his association as king, 699 of the Hispanic era, 661 AD. It stands amid wheat fields in the midst of the group of villages known as the Cerrato. Its internal measurements are twenty metres by eleven, and of the central nave less than six, which may give some idea of the number it could hold.



San Juan de Baños, Palencia, church founded for King Recceswinth.

The Baños of its name refer to the baptistery, important to the Goths. Recceswinth also presented the votive crown from the treasure of Guarrazar, with his name spelt in golden drops and decorated with large semi-precious stones. The wheat fields and the epic tradition preserve the Gothic atmosphere that pervades the area.¹²¹

Within the church, the enforcement of strict conformity raised difficulties for the legacy of St Martin. St Isidore had composed a history of the Sueves without adding to the work of Hydatius, and if he praised St Martin of Dume, his own object was the restoration of the provincial bounds as they had been in late Roman times. He had accepted the transfer of the metropolitan capitals to Saragossa and Toledo within their own provinces, but the church of St Martin still embraced the dioceses between the Tagus and the Douro which had belonged to Mérida and Lusitania. Roman Lusitania had ended at the banks of the Douro, and the northern frontier of the Sueves was on the Minho. The so-called 'suevic' coins were not produced in Braga, but in those towns and villages of Gallaecia which had adhered to the church of St Martin in the days of King Miro: they are not marked Suevic, but *Moneta Latina*.¹²²

St Martin's church was imbued with the teaching of the Desert Fathers, and his monasticism and her mitages are more adapted to a poorer countryside and less hierarchical than the Roman church envisaged by Isidore. For whatever reason, the metropolitan of Braga did not appear at Toledo in 638 or 646, which denounced the bishops of Braga for rapacity not

sanctioned by St Martin and also required hermits to submit to a period of monastic training. Dume itself was an abbey-church like that of the Britones, and formed an enclave in the church of Braga. Until 653, the councils of Toledo appear not to have admitted abbots, but then some appeared in their own right.

In 655 Potamius, metropolitan of Braga, confessed to carnal sin before a panel of bishops and was removed. In 656 Riccimer of Braga, having bequeathed his property to be distributed annually among the poor, the clergy complained that he had impoverished the church: his will was set aside. His successor was Fructuosus (656-665), son of a *dux* in the Bierzo and a devotee of St Eulalia of Mérida. He compensated the church.¹²³

In the same year Wamba, Recceswinth's senior general, presented under royal orders the testament of St Martin as well as that of Riccimer for revision. No further step was taken until after Fructuosus' death when the twelve bishops of Lusitania met under the leadership of their new metropolitan Proficius. The four dioceses, Lamego, Viseu, Conimbriga (moved to Aeminium, Coimbra) and Egitania, now Idanha, were transferred to Lusitania.¹²⁴

These changes following the adoption of the Code of the Visigoths intended to provide a single law for all Recceswinth's subjects, and later to be his chief claim to be recognized as eminent among Christian rulers. There is little evidence whether his reign was more or less disturbed than others, but the adoption of the single code fell far short of producing the unified state desired by both church and king.

Recceswinth died on September 1 672 at the *Villa Gothorum*, now Toro on the Douro, the westernmost Gothic settlement before Semura, Zamora, which belonged to the church of St Martin. It was close to the frontier, and he was attended by his army, which at once proclaimed Wamba as king. Recceswinth left no legitimate male heir. His younger half-brother Theodefred was barred from the succession by his irregular birth. It was not until September 18 that Wamba was consecrated in Toledo by the metropolitan Quiricus, who had held office since the death of St Ildefonso in 667. There had been no council of Toledo since 656, and Wamba had not been elected or confirmed by the bishops. It could not be denied that Wamba was the senior *dux* at, or near, the scene of the last king's death, as custom demanded. Nor was Wamba a member of the old palace nobility with roots in Gothic Gaul. His name or nickname was a Germanic word for belly, perhaps to be construed as 'pot-belly'. It was borne by a deacon of Segorbe, Wamba diaconus et Petrus, who attended Toledo VI in 638. The new king came from or acquired the village of Bamba, near Mota del Marqués, Valladolid, on the Leonese edge of Castile.

In Toledo the rise of a powerful plebeian soldier caused some consternation. Quiricus lacked the firm grip held by some of his predecessors. There had been no general council of the church since 656, and when there was, in 675, the relaxation of ecclesiastical discipline was at once noted, and there was a long and detailed profession of faith. It condemned 'inopportune cries' and enacted that the metropolitan must instruct his bishops, that abuses by bishops be checked and that there be no diversity within a province and no discord between bishops. The national council must be in the



metropolitan city. It was now the fourth year of Wamba's reign. The council thanked him for restoring the church, wished him peace, and made no mention of a guarantee to his wife or family.

By that time Wamba had successfully overcome a serious rebellion in the palatine order. The opposition first appeared in Gothic Gaul, once the home of the royal house of Leovigild, where Hilderic, *comes* of Nîmes, looked for support from his Gaulish or Frankish subjects and neighbours. Paul, *vir illustris* and *comes*, a Greek, was sent to negotiate, but on reaching Saragossa, defected with the connivance of its *dux* Ransind, whose rank he assumed for himself. Tarraconensis and Septimania joined in the insurrection. Wamba himself marched by way of the Vascones, and Paul declared himself king. He could not expect to rule in Toledo since he lacked the requisite of a Gothic name and parentage, but sent Wamba an arrogant letter calling himself ruler of the east and Wamba of the south. This implied a division of the state which was inadmissible to the Goths and to most of the episcopate. Wamba pursued Paul and captured him in the amphitheatre at Nîmes. He was brought back to Toledo, condemned, tonsured and paraded round the streets seated backward on an ass. His Frankish

Votive crown of Recceswinth.

adherents, probably not numerous, were granted a pardon. The war is the only one of the Gothic kingdom to have a detailed history, composed by the monk Julian, who presented a picture favourable to Wamba.

Once the dust had settled, Wamba authorized the council of November 1 675. It is numbered XI and was attended by only seventeen bishops, eight delegates, and the archdeacon of Toledo and the abbot of St Leocadia. Its purpose was clearly to go far beyond Cartaginensis. Perhaps because of the strong representation of the royal city, Mansi refers to it as provincial. It may have been followed by other provincial councils, but only that of Braga, III, of the same year, is recorded. This was attended by eight bishops: Ourense, Oporto, Tuy, the Britones, Lugo, Iria and Astorga, presided over by Leodigisus *cognomen Iulianus* of Braga. After the profession of faith, they adopted eight canons. They denounced superstitious practices: only bread, wine and water were admitted in church: the sacred vessels must not be employed for profane use: the bishop must wear his stole: no relics of martyrs were to be hung round the neck: clergy were not to live where there were women except their mothers: no office was to be sold. Thanks were given to Wamba and wishes for a long reign, but without mention of guarantees.

Lay life was regulated by the Visigothic code, which Wamba found already in place and was intended for all his subjects, though Gothic customary and oral practice was not formally abrogated or condemned. Its concepts elaborated by the palace jurists were entirely Roman, yet its most far-reaching consequence was the replacement of Roman legal administration by officials nominated by the crown or its delegates, but leaving the collection of tribute in the hands of *numerarii*, a duty Goths regarded as beneath their dignity. The code lists the judicial hierarchy which was to apply it. The king was commander of his armies, as well as the head of the judicial system: Recceswinth is remembered as a giver of laws and seems not to have commanded, though he may have been present when Wamba took the field. On their coins, kings were no longer *victor*: even the warrior-king Wamba was invariably *pius*. If kings were required to meet the test of having reached the undefined 'perfect age', this was because they must be capable of enforcing their decisions on their peers. In Aquitania, where the Gothic third became two-thirds, the Theodorics applied oral and customary law to their *optimates*, who alone might present the quarrels of their clients. For the Romans, the laws of Rome were administered by a system answerable to the pretorian prefect at Arles, with (for the senatorial class), appeal to the senate of Rome: church property enjoyed immunity. Under the *ius* of Euric, royal authority had extended to Aquitania I, and the king's Roman jurists had produced a code to protect the interests of Romans in their quarrels with Goths. The system was altered by the adoption of a single religious confession. The seat of legal studies was Seville. As Hydatius shows, there had been constant friction between Sueves and Romans, who preserved their Roman *rector* or urban magistrate in Lugo and probably other places, but it fell to the bishop to defend the general interests of his flock. For Isidore in 619 the great object was the application of Roman law in its entirety, with due respect for Gothic strength and military practice. The Visigothic code promulgated by Recceswinth was drawn up by palace jurists, who combined the codes of Euric and Alaric and laws called simply *antiquae* of whatever date, making the large assumption that the church was sufficiently covered by the right of bishops to participate in the consecration of a pious king, who would know how to deal with the vestiges of Gothic tradition.

Under the king, the hierarchy was set down: first, the *duces* and *comites* and their *vicarii*, who might correspond to the *optimates* and *viri illustres*. Then came the *thiufads*, commanders of a thousand, clearly of military origin. In Roman times a *comes* had been the companion of the emperor entrusted with the execution of his policy in some particular mission: Procopius notes disapprovingly its abuse in the sixth century for the leader of any band or contingent. The *dux*, properly any constituted leader, had now become superior to the *comes*. In broad terms, the *dux* commanded the troops in a whole province, while a *comes* was governor of a city. Those of the palatine order, the *illustres*, included those in charge of various offices. There were also a small number of *proceres*, perhaps members of previous or current royal families. The laymen, who attended Toledo VIII in 653, numbered eighteen, as compared with over fifty bishops.

The Visigothic code relegated the Roman judge or magistrate, the *rector*, to the lowest place. The professional judicial hierarchy was replaced by an order which was in origin military since even the *comes* now executed both functions. The code itself said nothing about one important subject, military service. Wamba filled the gap in November 673, only weeks after the suppression of Paul's rebellion. His 'military law' was prefaced by a reference to the decline in patriotic spirit. It required all those in authority, lay or ecclesiastic, to provide contingents forthwith on hearing of hostile action within a distance of a hundred miles. The penalty for failure to appear was confiscation of property, reduction to servitude or death by royal order: clergy might not be exiled. It is scarcely surprising that the repeal of the law should become a matter of moment with the bishops. They were opposed to the death-penalty and required the king to give an assurance that it should not be applied before allowing clergy to participate in any judicial capacity in which it might be invoked. The gravest penalties for the clergy were reclusion in a monastery or expulsion from the church and disgrace in a public ceremony; lesser faults seem to have been dealt with by an episcopal court *in camera*.

The military law affords a further glimpse of the Latinized Gothic hierarchy. After the *thiufad* or *millenarius*, it adds *gardingus* and any person holding a position in the place concerned or the vicinity. *Gardingus* appears for the first time, denoting as a separate class members of the royal guard. It was used as a proper name by the bishop of Tuy, who attended Toledo IV in 589. It now gave access to the palace nobility. A lady of noble extraction Benedicta is described as *ex gardingo regis sponsa*.¹²⁵ The guards raised by, or for, Wamba were thus brought on to the payroll of the fisc. There are no means of calculating the cost of the palace nobility and the professional military class to the payer of taxes. It was accompanied by the cost of new fortifications to Toledo. Wamba's buildings are recorded in an inscription preserved in the later *Continuatio*: unfortunately it does not say where the inscription was placed. Most of the existing walls of the royal city were rebuilt or added in the Middle Ages. The growth of military expenditure required higher taxation and a closer scrutiny of existing sources. Wamba's gold *trientes* came from only five mints, corresponding to the provincial capitals, Toledo, Tarragona, Seville, Cordova Patricia and Mérida. None is known from either Narbonne or Braga. There is a slight decline in average fineness, due chiefly to variation between specimens from the same mint. Miles knew only 131 coins of Wamba's reign of eight years, as compared with 247 of Recceswinth's reign of nineteen, or 660 of Swinthila's of ten years. No less significant is the fact that of the 131, 41 are from Toledo and 46 from Mérida,

the two greatest military cities, and only seven from Tarraconensis, which shared the fate of Gothic Gaul: Gallaecia is also lost sight of.

The restriction of mints to the provincial and metropolitan capitals is reflected in the reform of the diocesan boundaries. Wamba is credited with a more precise definition of each episcopal area in the *Divisio Wambae*, which shows the four points where each diocese touched its neighbours or the sea. It is preserved in many manuscripts, none of them earlier than the twelfth century, and has been given an apocryphal prologue. Many of the points named are not now identifiable, being remote and isolated settlements at a distance from the bishop's see, but those that abut on the sea appear correct. The diverse changes arise from local interpretations or amendments which cloak an authentic original intended to be permanent.¹²⁶ The *Divisio* varies in its versions. The number of sees under Seville was nine, but one version adds Tangier, harking back to a remote past. Gothic Gaul has six to nine, Toledo seven to twenty, Mérida seven to fourteen, and Braga eight to fourteen. At the councils of Toledo attendance was compulsory, but apologies for absence from the aged or infirm were accepted. The largest number to attend a council was 69 (III, 589), when some sees had two bishops and not all were represented. Among the charges later levelled against Wamba was the accusation that he had created dioceses where formerly there were none. Only one case is presented to substantiate the accusation: Steven, metropolitan of Mérida, had been obliged to consecrate a bishop at Aquas. There are more than one Aquas, but the one intended was Aquas Flaviae or Chaves in Portugal, to which Bishop Hydatius had withdrawn when the Sueves occupied Braga. It was not a see before nor later, but was believed to guard the relics of Pimenius, the Desert Father whose apophthegms are most often quoted by St Martin. It is likely that those who advised Wamba considered Chaves an authentic see.¹²⁷

Wamba's defence programme was set off by the rebellion of Paul, not by any external threat, except in the sense that he was threatened with secession, which might bring Frankish intervention. It did not do so, and Wamba prudently spared the few Franks involved. The language in which the military law is couched and the fortification of Toledo seem to imply that the court apprehended internal disorders more than foreign invasion. Wamba himself appears to have shown no special concern for the question of Judaism or for the church's desire for conversion. The Greeks in their present weakened condition were in no state to intervene, however much they might regard the Goths with suspicion.

A medieval source, the Chronicle of Alfonso III, composed before 900, says that in the time of Wamba a fleet of 270 Saracen ships attacked the Spanish coast and was defeated: all were burnt or sunk. It is echoed by Lucas of Tuy (1239-49) but otherwise unrecorded. The number of ships can be disregarded, but the chronicle of Alfonso III has information now lost and should not be dismissed too summarily. The Muslims had occupied Alexandria since their sudden conquest of Egypt in 640. The caliphate was established at Damascus in Syria, and their rulers combined boldness with caution. They had the advantage of Greek converts, whom they knew as Romans or Rum. Their land armies were fired with zeal and the promise of a just distribution of booty, but they had strict injunctions not to take risks at sea. The sea-trade of Antioch was in decline, but Alexandria was not only an international community but the leading commercial centre of the Mediterranean. Its name commemorates the Greek conqueror whose travels took him as far as India. Leontius, in his Greek *vita* of John of

Alexandria (early 7th century), notes that its merchants reached the Britains, where they exchanged wheat for Cornish tin. The city also had a famous library and was a centre of learning, preserving the Athenian tradition of contending philosophies. It produced heresies, not least among them that of Arius. Not far away in the waste beyond Thebes, the Desert Fathers had a cluster of monasteries. It submitted to the Muslims, though their military government was at Cairo, 'the conquering' or *Misr*, Egypt. They explored by inland routes the adjacent provinces of Tripolitania and Libya, the true Africa, their Ifriqiyya. Their forces were not large and were not invariably victorious. Their historians, writing much later, are neither annalists nor gatherers of documents, but rely heavily on *hadiths*, traditions or oral accounts by participants, transmitted by those of acknowledged honesty. The Arabs had an oral tradition of poetry and story-telling, and were not now much interested in their own history before the teaching of Muhammad or in that of the peoples they conquered. Nor did the Byzantines speak of their own losses. West of Alexandria, the only great trading city was the ancient port of Carthage. The city itself remained Greek until the end of the seventh century, whether ruled from Constantinople or not. In Africa proper, the towns and villages and Berber tribes were Christian.

The Arab historian ibn al-Athir (1160-1223) places the first conquest of Tripoli in November 642.¹²⁸ An earlier writer, ibn al-Hakam (802-891), says that the Emperor Heraclius appointed one Gregory to govern Africa from Carthage. He rebelled, minted his own coin and ruled the whole area from Tripoli to Tangier before being killed in battle with the Arabs, who took booty and a payment of tribute to stay away.¹²⁹ Ibn Khurradadbeh (c. 844) calls Gregory patrician and says that his stronghold was Sbaitla, Suffetula, the city of Byzacena far to the south of Carthage: it fell in 657. It was only in 670 that Qairawan was founded as a forward camp on the border of Tunisia. Under the Emperor Constantine IV (668-683) the Byzantine eparchy extended through coastal Mauritania to Ceuta, but the authority of the Greeks did not extend much beyond the ports and coastal towns. Many Berber communities, here Moors, enjoyed independence. The Muslim advances were by land, leaving the Greeks in an increasingly tenuous control of the seaboard. In what form and when these events came to the notice of Wamba is unknown. He was less preoccupied than the church or the merchants may have been. He did not press the anti-Jewish legislation, and his defence programme was as much directed towards internal rebellion as against foreign invasion. Bishop Quiricus, who had consecrated him, died in January 680. He was followed not by a Goth nor by a Roman but by the monk who had composed the history of his war, Julian of Toledo, born a Christian, but of *converso* parents. His reputation for learning was almost as great as that of St Isidore, though it inclined towards theology rather than classical antiquity.

8

THE RUIN OF SPAIN

Wamba's reign came to an abrupt close with his deposition on October 14, 680. He was found unconscious in the palace and thought likely to die. Julian tonsured him as a penitent, thus disqualifying him from the kingship. He annointed Erwig, the son of the Greek Ardabast and Khindaswinth's niece Cixilo. Wamba was despatched to the monastery of Pampliega, where he spent the rest of his life. Erwig's succession was confirmed by the prelates at Toledo XII on January 9, 681, who heard an account of the deposition which became official and was widely accepted. Many believed that Wamba had been tricked by a conspiracy on behalf of Erwig, who had had him drugged. There was no doubt that Erwig was a Goth only on his mother's side and by adoption. His marriage to Wamba's niece Liuvigotho brought him the adhesion of Wamba's *fideles*. The date of his birth is not recorded, but as his parents were married before the death of Khindaswinth in 653, he was of mature age. His own marriage to the niece of Wamba was the effect rather than the cause of his succession. Wamba himself attempted to protest, but on the ground that he had been defrauded rather than that any son of his had been dispossessed. The name of Wamba's wife is not recorded, nor that of any children he may have had. Illegitimacy was a bar to succession, and this eliminated Khindaswinth's other known son Theodefred.

The council that met in January 681 drew only 35 bishops, three delegates and four abbots. The list is headed by Julian of Seville, followed by Julian of the royal city, Liuva of Braga and Steven of Mérida. There follow the names of fourteen members of the palatine office, without distinction of their functions. The laymen are headed by Sesulf, followed by Reccared, Wittiza, and in eighth place Theodefred, the son of Khindaswinth. An Egila may be related to Egilo, who became Roderic's queen. The main purpose of the council was *ad regem confirmandum*, to hear the account of Wamba's deposition and the circumstances of Erwig's accession. Having listened to the exposition of the beliefs to be professed by the ruler and the church, it heard that Wamba, being gravely ill and having received the tonsure, had given written instructions that Erwig should be his successor: this meant that he was predestined by a hidden divine decision that made opposition sacrilegious and placed Erwig above any threat to his authority. It dealt with the question of whether anyone unconscious might be penitent, citing the case of the child who cannot spontaneously desire what it cannot understand. Among Wamba's faults was having ordered Steven of Mérida to consecrate a bishop where there had been none, namely at Aquas, where the venerable body of the confessor Pimenius

lay.¹³⁰ Furthermore, the council announced that King Erwig was pleased to mitigate Wamba's military law and to restore those whom Wamba had forbidden to testify. Those who put aside their lawful wives should after three episcopal warnings be deprived of their palatine dignity until they obeyed. The laws against Judaism were also set forth and confirmed.

The chief beneficiary of the council was Julian himself, for appended to the acts is the decree of Gundemar of October 610 which formally declared the bishop of Toledo to be metropolitan with primacy over all others and forbade any attempt to challenge his authority in Cartaginensis. This may have already been the case *de facto*, but it now became unchallengeable. The combination of Roman culture and Gothic power, anticipated by St Isidore, was realized in a fashion he could not have foreseen. The Germanic monarchy dear to the Goths was preserved in name and with the limitations inherent in primogeniture. St Julian exercised authority over church and state for almost a decade. If Seville remained the centre of legal studies, the position of the metropolitan of Toledo was asserted: it was Julian who consecrated the monarch with oil, following the ancient precedent of King David.

Nearly three years later, on November 6 683, another council, Toledo XIII, was convened. It met in the royal church of the Holy Apostles, Sts Peter and Paul, rather than the popular basilica of St Leocadia, where Gothic opinion might manifest itself in shouts and gestures. It was presided over by Julian of Toledo: Liuva of Braga was present, but there was now a new incumbent at Seville, so that the metropolitan of Toledo was in clear command. The prelates having occupied their benches, Erwig appeared with 26 *illustres* of the palace. He read his *tomus* and retired, leaving the prelates to their deliberations. He asked for a further definition of ecclesiastical and royal authority. His first point was that he was bound to seek the advice of the bishops and wished to do justice to those condemned by Wamba to lose their right to testify and their property by confiscation. He also wished to alleviate the crushing burden of taxation, which might ruin the whole state, and therefore decided to remit all arrears before his own reign. It was dreadful that freedmen or serfs should be compared with nobles or occupy positions in the palace (except freedmen or serfs of the fisc).¹³¹

The bishops agreed that those deprived for treason under Paul should be restored to their former status together with all those disgraced since the time of Khintila. A further debate resolved that *optimates* of the palace and *gardingi* should not be deprived of their rank, though those under suspicion near the frontier might be placed under detention. The assembly decided to repay the king by defending the royal family. No one might harm his descendants or the glorious queen Liuvigotho under pain of exile or death: on the death of the king no one might dare to marry or violate his widow. The acts of Toledo XII were confirmed, the exclusion of those penitent while unconscious being repeated. This seems to imply that Wamba was still alive, and that his clients and Liuvigotho required to be reassured.¹³²

The acts of the council were subscribed by 44 bishops, 19 delegates of bishops, eight abbots and a precentor. The new metropolitan of Seville was Floresind. The 26 members of the palatine office include seven who are both *comes et dux*. Five of these are *comes scanciarum et dux*: they include a Suniefred, who later briefly usurped the throne. Erwig, not himself a military man, was hedged about with a high command. The number of these high officers

corresponds to the number of provinces: this may be a coincidence. The *comes* of Toledo is Walderic, *comes toletanus*, a rank that was appropriate for the governor of an important city. Three of the group are *proceres* without further distinction, entitled to be included by their high birth. There is no mention of Wamba's *gardingi*, who had acquired the status of a lower nobility and were rewarded with pensions or estates in the gift of the crown, often confiscated from those who had been faithful to previous rulers.

The Council of 683 considered the revision of taxes for 'Gaul, Gallaecia and all the provinces of Spain', except what was due to the fisc. It also records the hierarchy in order of rank: *dux*, *comes*, *thiufad*, *numerarius* and *villicus*. The first three of these were now usually Goths, of recognised standing.

A year later, on November 14 684, the bishops were again summoned to Toledo XIV. Its business was solely ecclesiastical, and therefore did not call for the presence of the king or his court. Pope Leo II, who had been elected in December 681 but was not consecrated until the following August, sent to ask that the Hispanic churches should all confirm the decisions of the general council of Constantinople of 681, condemning monothelitism and similar misconceptions which Honorius I had let slip by nearly half a century before. It now seemed possible to impose unity on the Eastern church on Roman terms. Leo sent similar letters to Quiricus, Erwig and others to ensure compliance. Quiricus was now dead: Rome felt unsure lest the son of a Greek and a metropolitan born of *converso* parents might backslide.¹³³

The council in Toledo was attended by Julian and the other metropolitans but only the bishops of Cartaginensis, or 24 prelates in all: the metropolitans would secure the agreement of their own bishops. The meeting served to fix the ascendancy of Julian, who was quite capable of holding his own with Rome on theological questions.

In the eyes of the church Erwig was pious and modest. He is not recorded as conducting any military campaigns and there is no sign that Wamba's fortifications were completed: an inscription from Mérida shows that its great bridge was restored after the reconstruction of the walls. This does not mean that there was a relaxation of the demands of the fisc, given the restitution of property to many who had been disgraced and the addition of Wamba's *fideles* and *gardings* to the budget of the state. The reign was a series of compromises or concessions to the groups the king had to satisfy. There is no record of provincial affairs comparable with the history of the fathers of Mérida.

The silence is broken by the autobiography of the hermit or monk Valerius who came from one of the monasteries founded by Fructuosus in the Bierzo. He gives no dates but covers the period from Erwig until the Muslim conquest. He is vehement against the tyranny of Toledo. A magnate named Riccimer gave him a horse and promised to build him a church, but did not do so, having been despoiled of his possessions by royal command. Valerius' bishop, Isidore of Astorga, a 'pestiferous' man, bade him join his party to attend a council of Toledo. He was spared the ordeal of visiting the den of iniquity by Isidore's death. This could only have been the council of 683: Isidore of Astorga had attended Braga III in 675, but at Toledo in 683 Aurelius of Astorga did not appear, being represented by Abbot Leopard.



Imperial Toledo.

Erwig's mints break the close discipline imposed by Wamba, and number twelve, with an increase in the number of coins known to Miles from 131 to 172. This is partly accounted for by the reappearance of Narbonne, still the only mint in Gothic Gaul. Gallaecia is totally absent. There is a small decline in the overall standard of fineness. Pieces from Toledo and Mérida fall within the same limits as under Wamba, but some of those from Narbonne are noticeably light.^{??}

Nothing is recorded of an awareness of the affairs of North Africa. In 681 'Uqba ibn Nafi was reappointed by the caliph Yazid and carried the frontier from Tripolitana to QairÇwan. From it he led a party through the interior of Mauritania: it was not an invading force but rather an exploratory mission. He reached Tangier, but found that Ceuta was strongly held by an alien people, and learning that there were heathens to the south, reached the Ocean before turning back. He left missionaries to spread Islam among the Berber tribes, some of whom

were devout Christians, though the Byzantine eparchy had lost much of what had once been the Roman *limes*. He found that the way to attack Rome by land was through the Spains. It could hardly be undertaken so long as Carthage remained in Byzantine hands. When, or indeed if, Ceuta passed from Greek to Gothic hands is not known. The alien people 'Uqba found might be either: both were alien to his Berber converts. The Arab accounts are much later and composed in the light of their conquest of the Spains. The historian ibn al-Athir, in a summary of the many accounts of the conquest, says that 'Uqba found Ceuta commanded by one Ulyan. Other writers mention a *comes iulianus*, which may simply refer to the area called Iulia Traducta, or Julia beyond the Straits, using the adjectival form as in the *comes toletanus* for the count of Toledo.

Erwig died in November 687 in or near Toledo, having dismissed his retinue and designated his successor. He was Egica, one of the five members of the palatine hierarchy who in 683 were *comes scanciarum et dux*. His consecration took place in the pretorian church of St Peter and St Paul and was followed in May 688 by a council of Toledo, XV. It was attended by 56 bishops and four deputies, eleven abbots and seventeen *illustres*, all called *comes* but not distinguished by their functions. Erwig had received the now usual guarantees for his wife Liuvigotho and her children. These, if born after 680, would not attain the 'perfect age' until the end of the decade. His successor was a military man who contrived to rule for sixteen years, the longest reign since Recceswinth. He became a strong king, the only ruler since Khindaswinth to associate his son and so secure the foundation of a dynasty.¹³⁵

Egica's glorious queen was Cixilo, who bore the name of the mother of Erwig and niece of Khindaswinth, a member of the high nobility. The two Cixilos were probably mother and daughter, and the queen was probably related to Cixila, *comes notariorum* in 683 and *comes* in 688.¹³⁶ Since St Julian had consecrated Egica, he can hardly have disapproved of the marriage. The date of the union is not recorded, but if it were related to Egica's succession, the children would be at least a decade younger than those of Erwig and Liuvigotho. Liuvigotho had been guaranteed with her offspring by previous councils, including that of 683, but no son of Egica and Cixilo would become eligible until nearly the end of the century.

The council of 688 was the last of St Julian. It dealt almost entirely with royal and secular matters. Egica appeared in person and delivered his wishes in writing to the assembled bishops, who appeared in strength, 66 of them. Egica was escorted by seventeen *comites*, who included Waldemir and Cixilo, but not Theodefred.¹³⁷

Egica's first request was for guidance: he had taken two oaths, which proved incompatible, one was to his father-in-law Erwig, who had given him his glorious wife, and the other, taken on Erwig's deathbed, was to do justice to all his subjects. He could not do both things, since his predecessor had committed cruel oppression by depriving many of their possessions: what should he do to avoid committing injustice? The deliberation began after a long exposition of the nature of the divinity according to St Julian. It decided that King Erwig, while giving his glorious daughter to Egica, had also promised to protect his glorious wife, the lady Queen Liuvigotho, etc., etc. The prelates decided that public good must prevail over private, and the oaths demanded by Erwig, though legal, should not impede the course of justice.

The language, like the argument, seems both captious and turgid, and has been misunderstood. Lucas of Tuy thought that Egica wished to be rid of his wife in order to marry another woman. No other writer says this, and it appears unlikely since Egica owed his throne to his legal marriage. Thompson thought that Egica wanted to ruin his wife's relations.¹³⁸ On the contrary, Egica wanted to be sure that the progeny of Liuvigotho should not displace his own by Cixilo, whom he managed to bring to the throne in the person of Wittiza. The date of birth of the prince is not recorded, but he existed before 688, since Egica associated him before the end of the century when he was an adolescent.

During Julian's lifetime, Egica had to be content with the decision. But the metropolitan of the royal city died in January 690, having successfully consolidated Toledo as the only metropolitanate, the others becoming simply bishops, or as the Gauls might say, archbishops. His successor was Sisbert, possibly the abbot who appeared at Toledo XIII in 683. Julian's was a difficult place to fill, and his tenure was brief.

Opinions of Egica's reign differ and are contradictory. Isidore of Beja, writing in about 750, after the Muslim conquest, probably in Seville, says that he persecuted the Goths with bitter death, humiliating them and robbing them of their property. Much later, the chronicle of Alfonso III picks up a northern tradition: he was wise and prudent and put down rebels. He had fought three campaigns against the Franks, but without any triumph.

Egica is indeed the only ruler since Khindaswinth to put the epithet 'victor' on his coins. But these are late and few, and from Braga and Tuy, just before he installed his son Wittiza to govern at Tuy. His campaigns against the Franks are not mentioned by any early source. Three reverses would have sufficed to bring a Gothic king down. They may well have touched off the great revolt of 691–692, after which he ruthlessly crushed his rivals.

The riddle is solved with the aid of a unique coin minted at Toledo and marked *Svniefredvs Toletō pivs*. It is dated on stylistic grounds c. 692–693, Suniefred was in 683 one of the five *duces* and *comites scanciarum*, with Egica, or the next most senior member of the palace military hierarchy. He was consecrated by the sole metropolitan Sisbert. No similar coins were produced anywhere else. The revolt began and ended in the royal city. In April 693, the metropolitan Sisbert was deposed, disgraced, and defrocked with others deemed guilty. Suniefred's name does not appear among them or later: he had already been dealt with. Since Egica was safe and resumed his interrupted reign, he either escaped or was absent. In November 691 a council met at Saragossa, III. The signatures of those who attended are lacking. It refers to King Egica's summons, but makes no mention of any metropolitan. Rome had often stressed the importance of provincial councils to assure the unity of the church, but none is recorded since Braga III in 675. The agenda at Saragossa was not that of a provincial council, but was concerned solely with royal affairs. It laid down that on the death of a king, his widow must abandon secular life forthwith and devote her days to religion. It goes beyond Toledo XIII in that she was not so much protected as taken into custody. Since Liuvigotho and her kin were among those condemned with the deposition of Sisbert, there can be no doubt that she was the personage intended.

Egica had obtained the consent of St Julian to rescind his oath, but did not act so long as Julian lived. Nothing is known of Egica's unsuccessful campaigns against the Franks, which may have been limited to the defence of Gothic Gaul.¹³⁹ The senior commander in Toledo seized power with the support of the *fideles* of Wamba, who had received pensions or awards from the state and were now removed from the traditionalist Gothic territories. The council of Saragossa of November 691 implies that this had already occurred, while Suniefred's coin suggests a date in 692. The trial and deposition of Bishop Sisbert could not take place until a satisfactory metropolitan was in place: he was Felix of Seville, the author of the *vita* of St Julian. He was followed at Seville by Faustinus of Braga. Promotion by seniority seems to have been adopted, though without contesting the primacy of Toledo.¹⁴⁰

Egica's savage repression of the Goths dates from the time of the rebellion. Isidore of Beja evidently refers to the Goths of the north, who had followed Wamba as represented by his niece. Egica himself belonged to the class brought on to the pay-roll of the state with their gardings. Egica's marriage to Cixilo had gained him the support of the palatine order, but the lines were now less clearly drawn. Gothic Gaul had suffered most at the hands of Wamba and took relief from the succession of Erwig. To some, the appearance of Egica meant a return to Wamba's tribalism. Egica's later victories were in the north-west, and enabled him to call himself victor at Braga and Tuy. After this campaign he left his heir Wittiza there to represent him. The chronicle of Alfonso III says that he placed Wittiza at Tuy 'so that the father might rule the kingdom of the Goths and the son that of the Sueves.' It was less than a lifetime since Wamba had suppressed the church of St Martin, but neither this nor the suppression of the monarchy had obliterated the customs and speech of the Sueves, more Romanized than the Goths by nearly a century and to that extent more identified with the population of Braga, Oporto and Tuy.

Wittiza was then adolescent. An anecdote preserved by the Albeldense (c. 550) and the Epitome of Oviedo tells that the prince attempted to abuse his authority by seducing the wife of the *dux* Fafila, appointed as his mentor, whom he struck with his club, causing his death. Fafila is said to have been the father of Pelayo, the royal *spatarius* who escaped from Cordova after the Muslim invasions and founded the neo-Gothic state in the Asturian and Cantabrian mountains¹⁴¹. King Fafila or Favila, whose reign was abbreviated by an encounter with a bear in 739, was his descendant.

After the great rebellion, Egica became a prey to his fears. He had dealt with Sisbert, Suniefred and Liuvigotho and her kin, Frogellus, Theodemir, Liuvila and Tecla, who included a son who might have had a better claim to the succession than his own heir. He then vented his fears on Theodefred, the illegitimate son of Khindaswinth, who posed no threat because of his irregular birth, but having married a wife of high birth, Riccila, *ex magno genere uxor*, he thought might become a focus for the dissatisfied. Theodefred was blinded and sent to Cordova in exile. He was not a military man, but he had a young son Roderic, who was to become a *dux*.¹⁴² This impression of Egica tallies with the address he made to his last council of Toledo, XVII, in November 694, in which he declared that the Jews had opposed Christian rulers in various parts of the world, killing some and setting up Jewish rulers who acted against Christians. The Jews were known to exist in the *clausuras*, the passage between Gothic Gaul and the Spains. The bishops heard the message and approved. There were 61 who

attended. No list of the palatine order is preserved. Egica's announcement implies first that Islam was regarded as a variant of Judaism and second that he did not apprehend any invasion from the south, but some form of subversion in Gothic Gaul, then as before the chief cause for concern of the rulers of Toledo. The king's belief in a plot directed against himself is rejected by Thompson as 'of course a figment or an invention of Egica's.' It may well be that he suffered from some form of persecution mania. But the statement that Jews had rebelled against Christian rulers and killed some may not be fictitious. It refers rather to reports from Africa. After 'Uqba's journey through the interior of Mauritania, there was a period of quiet. When the Emperor Heraclian heard of the death of Gregory, he appointed a successor who sent an agent to collect tribute from Carthage, who met with a rebuff. In 692 or 693 Byzantines from Sicily carried off booty to Constantinople. Carthage did not yet fall, but some of the inhabitants of Africa fled to Sicily and some to Spain.¹⁴³ The Christian Berber queen Kahina and her sons resisted until her death in 693.

Egica's laws against Judaism were the most drastic yet issued. Conversion was made compulsory, and children were to be placed with Christians until the age of seven. Among those converted by whatever means, backsliding was punishable by enslavement and the confiscation of property. As the main object was to avoid conspiracy with foreigners, suspects were to be removed from the coast and obliged to live in the interior. What was feared was contagion by merchants coming from the East. There were two routes for commerce, the northern which hugged the coast to Marseille, Narbonne and Barcelona, and the southern by way of Carthage, Ceuta and the ports of Baetica, particularly Seville, where there was a large colony of Jews. Egica's *tomus* was not produced without the knowledge of his metropolitan Felix, former bishop of Seville.

The council of 694 is the last firm date given before the fall of the kingdom of Toledo. No council is recorded for either of the last two rulers.¹⁴⁴

Egica's coins from Toledo marked 'victor' refer to his success over the usurper Suniefred. Two pieces from Guadix are also marked 'victor'. The two coins from Braga and Tuy similarly marked refer to his later expedition to the north-west, when he was able to place Wittiza at Tuy.¹⁴⁵ Under Egica the number of mints again rose. Wamba's mints had been issued from only five cities, the provincial capitals, excluding Braga and Narbonne. Erwig had twelve mints and Egica nineteen in a much longer reign. Wamba's military discipline had combined the force of a recent centralizing code of law with a concentration of authority in the hands of the five provincial *duces*. Erwig, guided by Julian, had maintained himself by making concessions to various interests. Having himself no son eligible to succeed, he chose Egica as the most promising of his *duces*, giving him in marriage his daughter, and exacting an oath to protect Liuvigotho and her young children. This done, he attempted to guarantee the succession to his own son by Cixilo, still with the qualified approval of Julian. However, his first campaigns against the Franks did little to justify the choice. This was followed by the rebellion of Suniefred, which followed the death of Julian, and in turn led to repression of all possible rivals. Wittiza was appointed to rule over the Suevic kingdom at a very young age. It was only when he was recalled to Toledo and associated, that coins were issued bearing both names and effigies. The dual reign was accompanied by Wittiza's marriage, and the birth of his own heir.

The coins never record dates, and the written sources are few and incompatible. The *Laterculus* or list of kings gives precise dates but no other information. It may be traced to the tenth century. The nearest approach to a contemporary narrative is the *Continuatio* (to St Isidore) of Isidore of Beja (Pacensis) composed in about 750, and its parallel, formerly called the 'anonymous of Cordova', which combines it with other information of Greek or Syrian origin.¹⁴⁶ Isidore himself is economical in facts, but gives some dates, which usually are confirmed by the dates of the hegira in the Syrio-Byzantine version. Some important gaps are filled by the Chronicle attributed to Alfonso III of c. 900, particularly in its 'second version'.¹⁴⁷

Since Egica was married in the reign of Erwig, October 680 to November 687, Wittiza would be between eleven and seventeen in 698, and adolescent at the time of his affray with the *dux* Fafila at Tuy, sufficiently attested by Alfonso III and later writers. Isidore of Beja says that Egica, having persecuted the Goths with bitter death, was already decrepit when Wittiza was summoned to Toledo and associated with him, which the *Laterculus* ascribes to November 700.¹⁴⁸ In the dual reign the number of coins known to Miles rises from 168 for Egica alone to 216, with an increase of mints to 21. The average weight continues to decline.

It does not appear that the old tyrant abandoned his ways. His last known act is a law dated to his sixteenth year, which began in November 702. It imposed drastic penalties on fugitive slaves. A serf who failed to denounce one who fled must receive 150 lashes in public, a freedman 100 lashes and a fine of 72 solidi: a whole community would be lashed for failure to comply. Judges and others who failed to act, lay or ecclesiastical, would incur a fine of 216 solidi (or 648 trientes).¹⁴⁹ The edict, inserted in the laws of the Visigoths, is too unbalanced to have been applied. According to the *Laterculus*, it was followed in the same month by Egica's death and the beginning of the sole reign of his heir.

heavy fines expressed raise the question of the value of Egica's gold. Under Wittiza the decline in the general average weight of the triens sharpens even more, dropping to barely four-fifths of that under Khindaswinth and Recceswinth, only those of Toledo remain usually respectable. Gallaecia is entirely absent. In Miles' day only 80 specimens were known from only ten mints. A marked debasement begins with Egica and thereafter the proportion of silver increases greatly: during the dual reign the majority of the coins are of 'pale gold' or electrum and many have the appearance of silver rather than gold.¹⁵⁰ The use for which the coins were struck has been much discussed. They were at first intended to reward barbarian leaders for their services. The value of a single coin discounts any use for purchases in the market-place: the crude pieces of base metal used in Seville and perhaps other places filled this function. For large transactions and for international exchange they were weighed against the standard of Constantinople and changers would notice any devaluation. The large clusters found in a few hoards suggest their use as banks in the possession of individuals or families to prove their affluence over the generations. The impression of an increasing concentration of wealth in a few hands receives fragmentary confirmation from later sources. The son of the *comes* Theodemir, Athanagild, was mulcted of 27,000 solidi. Isidore says that the caliph of Damascus had been given some idea of the value of the conquest, which was put at over a million *solidi*, or three million trientes.

The main source of wealth was the possession of land and men to till it. The crown itself owned a bank of thousands of villages or estates, which it used to reward its adherents and replenished, when occasion arose, by confiscation. Whether Egica was incapacitated or not, it was known that Wittiza would set out to conciliate his father's victims. Isidore says 'those whom the one had oppressed with a heavy yoke, the other soon filled with rejoicing, and those who the one had deprived of their possessions, the other restored and redressed with many gifts', burning the tax-demands and redeeming them from the fisc. One of the beneficiaries was the church, for Isidore thought Wittiza's a prosperous reign. Another was Roderic, the son of Theodefred and grandson of Khindaswinth. It is not recorded whether he participated in his father's exile, but his name was associated with Cordova Patricia. Its chief palace, probably that built for the Byzantine governor, was known to the Arabs as the Balat Rudrigu. Theodefred, was born before the death of Khindaswinth in 653, and appeared as an *illustris* at Toledo in 681 and as *comes* in 693. Though himself debarred from the succession, his son had not this disadvantage. As he became *dux* and was qualified to succeed Wittiza in 710, Roderic was born before 690. It does not appear that Theodefred was involved in the conspiracy of 692, but was rather a victim of the witch-hunt that followed. The penalty of blinding on suspicion of disloyalty had been approved by his own father.¹⁵¹ Roderic was probably educated like other scions of noble families at or near Toledo, where his mother Riccilo, a woman of high birth, would possess property. He was an approximate contemporary of Wittiza, but was given a military training. Isidore himself, who wrote forty years later, was a young cleric at the time.

Egica had convened several councils, of which the last to be recorded is that of 694, presided over by Felix, the sole metropolitan and former bishop of Seville and restorer of the church of St Julian. There was no need for a council *ad regem confirmandum* for the accession of Wittiza, who had already exercised royal power for four or five years. Grosse places the death of Felix in 700, when he was succeeded by Gunderic. He follows Mansi in accepting the existence of a Toledo XVIII, under Wittiza and Gunderic, though no trace of it now survives. But if so, Egica was still alive, and had not yet produced the drastic law against fugitive slaves, which affected laymen and ecclesiastics alike. Isidore of Beja, who revered Julian and Felix, thought Wittiza *bonimotus*, well-intentioned, but *petulans*, which has the senses of insistent, vexatious and lascivious, all of which seem to fit the case. Felix had had the active support of a ruthless despot, who had assured his own consecration, but of Gunderic, he says only that he was considered illustrious for his holiness and was the author of many marvellous works: all Spain rejoiced at Wittiza's clemency. His successor Sindered found a bench of bishops composed of men well stricken in years, and of exemplary life, 'longebos et merito honorabiles'. Gundered was constantly harassed by demands in the name of Wittiza, 'instinctiam dicti Wittizae eos convexare non cessat'. The nature of the importunity is not expressly stated. The northern tradition picked up by Alfonso III, himself a powerful monarch, makes Wittiza wanton 'like the horse and the mule that have no understanding'; he called no council of the church lest he be condemned, and depraved the order of religion by allowing bishops, priests and deacons to have wives, this being the cause of the ruin of Spain. In the light of hindsight, Wittiza's carnal shortcomings have put on weight.

If the metropolitan Felix died in 700, the choice of the successor fell upon Egica. He was Gundered (or Gunderic, *Namenbuch*, 166), of whom nothing is known save that Isidore

considered him monkish and unworldly. They were characteristics recommendable to a strong king, though they did not altogether satisfy Isidore of Beja, who was in the tradition of Seville and Felix. He was perhaps not the person best equipped to resist the pressure exerted through Wittiza. If Wittiza importuned the bishop, it was on behalf of his own house. The only adult male of the family was Oppa, a son of Egica who became bishop of Seville. He was either illegitimate or a younger son: of the two the former is more probable since Wittiza himself was less than thirty, the age at which bishops could be consecrated, when he died. Isidore does not grant the title of bishop, but makes him the guardian or trustee of Wittiza's sons, his nephews. The chronicle of Alfonso III calls him metropolitan of Seville, who later attempted to convince Pelayo to submit to the Muslims since further resistance was useless. The chronicle also makes him the son of Wittiza, which must be discounted. Among much that remains uncertain, it appears that Oppa was bishop of Seville and that Wittiza's insistence was in attempting to restore him to the rank of metropolitan, which had been set aside by Julian, but recovered by Felix on his translation to Toledo. The duration of Gundered's tenure coincided approximately with the reign of Wittiza, since it was his successor Sindere who consecrated King Roderic.¹⁵²

Although the name of Wittiza's queen is unknown, their sons were Olmund, Ardabast and Romulus. Only the first bore the Gothic name required of a king. The second was called after the Greek father of Erwig, and the third has an indisputably Roman name, even if nothing else is known of him. If Wittiza was still adolescent in about 698 and was not yet thirty when he died in 710, his eldest legitimate son was not above thirteen or fourteen, and in any case below the 'perfect age'. The defence of his succession and of the principle of primogeniture fell to Bishop Oppa of Seville. In the event, the successor was Roderic, who reigned for a year before being killed in the disastrous battle that led to the Berber conquest. Roderic was then a *dux* and *vir bellator*, of age, and equipped to be a leader of men. He was duly consecrated by the metropolitan Sindere, who had succeeded Gundered not long before. He married Egilo, whose name suggests that of Egila, an *illustris* in 681 or Ega, *comes* in 684. No children are recorded. There was no council *ad regem confirmandum*. He was therefore unconfirmed in the eyes of the church: Isidore refers to him as reigning, or holding the sceptre of the kingdom, without using the title of king. He had taken (*invadit*) power at the behest of the senate, *ortante senatu*, the senate being the seniors of the palatine order, not the bishops. He uses the word *tumultuose*. This may mean after open discord, or simply usurpatively, as seen by a churchman with a preference for primogeniture. The author, in speaking of Leontius, who usurped the empire in Constantinople from Justinian II in 695 and was himself replaced by Tiberius III in 698, applies the forms *tumultuose* and *tumultualiter*. The consecration sufficed for Roderic to issue coin from Toledo. Miles saw only a single specimen. Three others are marked Egitania, or Idanha in Lusitania.¹⁵³

The purport of this is that Roderic was recognized at one place in Lusitania, of which he was probably *dux*. Cordova supported him, but no coins of his have been found from the city or anywhere else. The fewness of the surviving coins points to the brevity of his reign. There would have been time to produce coins elsewhere, had the provincial authorities been satisfied with the succession. In the spring of 711, he set off for the north-east, and was at, or near, Saragossa or Pamplona when he received news of the Berber invasion.

The Arab *Akhbar majmu'a*, or collection of reports of the conquest, says that he was absent from Toledo and engaged on a mission at Pamplona. It is a miscellany compiled in the tenth century, when many verbal accounts left by participants were available, but were handed down in a form that risks errors and misunderstandings. Peculiar among them is the Wittizan family tradition preserved by ibn al-Qutiyya, the 'son of the Goths', a learned descendant of Sara, the daughter of Olmund and grand-daughter of Wittiza, who went to Damascus to defend her rights against her uncle Ardabast, and was upheld by the caliph. He took the opportunity to give her an Arab husband. Their Muslim descendant, writing in Cordova, heard that Roderic, the meanest of Wittiza's subjects, was chosen by the people as a warrior, the sons of Wittiza being lads able to ride. Their partisans had answered Roderic's command to join him, but dared not enter the city of Cordova, and wrote to the Berber Tàriq on the eve of the battle, during which they defected: this was the cause of the Muslim conquest.

The Arabs do not say much of the previous history of the peoples they conquered, and the Greeks rarely describe their losses. In Constantinople the Greco-Roman empire suffered several usurpations, and although the reigns of the caliphs were often short, the practice of polygamy ensured a choice of dynastic succession. Not all were equally intent on the conquest of Ifriqiyya. In 688 the Arab governor was killed by a Greek expedition from Sicily. There followed the resistance of the Berber Christians of Queen Kahina, who concluded that the Arabs wanted gold and tribute and could be halted by creating a waste where neither was to be had. The Arabs attacked Carthage in 693, after which ibn al-Athir says that many Greeks fled to Italy and Spain. In 698 the fall of the great port of Carthage brought its fleet under Muslim control. It limited the Greeks to a tenuous hold on the towns and coast as far as Ceuta. The Berber interior of Mauritania was known to the Arabs since 681, but still unsubdued when Mūsa ibn Nusair was sent by the caliph al-Walid to govern Qairāwan in late 707. The Arab historians report a raid on Majorca led by a son of Mūsa, who brought back booty. He then subdued the Berbers of inner Mauritania as far as Tangier, where he placed his freedman Tàriq ibn Ziyad and some Arabs to indoctrinate the tribes. The status of Ceuta is uncertain: if it had passed under Gothic command, this was because of its proximity to the coast of Baetica and the city of Seville. When it was recovered by the Portuguese, it relied on the support of the Gumaras from the hills of the interior, who lent their services for a short period: this was in the summer of 1415, seven centuries later. In the time of Mūsa, the indoctrination of the Berbers was a necessary preparation for the conquest. It was accompanied by the promise that Islam would ensure a fairer distribution of booty than previous conquerors. It was a message easily understood if matters of monotheistic theology were not. There were one or more exploratory expeditions, which are not precisely dated.

What Egica had feared was a conspiracy of his Jewish subjects rather than an invasion in force. Even if the recognized ports were guarded by his rigorous edicts, there were shelters or landing-places, for which Isidore employs the Greek term 'kataploi', used by Cicero for a point of arrival or landfall. One such raiding-party put in at Tarifa, named after its captain, who had four ships and 400 men. It brought booty, and Tàriq was informed and advanced to what came to be known as Algeciras, the Isle, or more fully the Green Isle: the Arabic word is applied to a promontory, and to the whole Iberian Peninsula. This may have been before the death of Wittiza, and if so would reinforce the argument for a more war-like ruler.

Roderic's concern was at first to secure his authority in his divided kingdom. Military authority rested ultimately on the active support of the *duces* of the provinces as much as on those who formed the core of the palatine order. There is no evidence that his authority extended beyond Toledo, Mérida and perhaps Cordova, but not Seville or Saragossa. Pamplona was the Romanized city which lent its name to Pampliega, where Khindaswinth had enlisted the backing of the Goths of Old Castile. There is no evidence that he won over Saragossa, much less that he reached Gothic Gaul. When he received news of the emergency, he sent out messengers to order his subjects to rally to him at Cordova, probably without himself returning to Toledo. The party he had with him was mounted and not very numerous. The penalties for non-compliance were grave, even if the military law of Wamba had been mitigated. The Arab sources speak of a vast Gothic army of a hundred thousand, serving to underline their own success. Meanwhile, Mûsa had informed the caliph of the reports he had received from Tàriq. Tàriq had appealed to him for reinforcements, and he supplied five thousand Arabs, drawn mainly from those he had commanded during his governorship of Egypt. He was both ambitious and cautious, and covered himself by informing the caliph, who warned him against risking an Arab army to the perils of the Ocean. He replied that the seas were not the Ocean but a narrow Strait. The total Muslim force is put at some thirteen thousand, of which seven were Tàriq's Berbers and five Mûsa's Arab contingent. Prominent among these was Mugaith ibn ar-Rumi, whose name proclaims his Greek origin, a freedman of the caliph. None of these numbers is to be taken literally: they show what was thought proper to the occasion. The Muslims had few horses, and the Gothic leaders were well-mounted.

The encounter took place in July 711, on the shore of a lagoon named La Janda. The opponents viewed one another for some time, perhaps days, before the clash took place. The Goths dismounted and parked their steeds together in the rear. King Roderic was killed, and many of the Gothic nobles fled. His body was not found; he was thought to have perished or have been deposited in the water.

In contrast with the absence of Greek and meagreness of Latin references, there is a plethora of Arabic accounts. Lévi-Provençal, who examined them closely for his *Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane*, remarks that the chronology is extremely confused and warns that he can only say what seems to him probable.¹⁵⁴ Among the Goths the apprehension of treachery lies like a miasma on the air. Isidore of Beja thought that Roderic had seized power by theft rather than by virtue, and that the Goths, who joined him in rivalry and fraudulence, were actuated by ambition for power so that he lost the kingdom and the *patria* together. Oppa is drawn into the picture as the Berbers reach Toledo, and he is responsible for the murder of many noble Goths. Isidore does not spare the saintly metropolitan, who fled to Rome, abandoning his flock like a mercenary rather than a true shepherd. His editor in *Chronica minora* expresses some surprise that Isidore does not criticize the Muslims. The Berbers were then seen as raiders and adventurers, and the crust of *odium theologicum* built up in later centuries had not hardened. Even after the second Arab conquest, when he commends the *comes* Theodemir, a righteous and pious Christian, who made what he considered an honourable capitulation, he does not change his tone. Ibn al-Qutiyya, presenting the Wittizan tradition, ascribes the conquest to the partisans of their late king having written to Tàriq on the eve of the battle, and defected on the field, the metropolitan Oppa from the left and Sisbert from

the right: other Arabic versions garble the names. Ibn al-Qutaiba, adds lavish oriental effects, and embroiders them with speeches, divine favour and extravagant accounts of Gothic treasure. *Akhbar majmu'a* includes a wide range of versions and is more popular and less erudite.¹⁵⁵

After their success, the invaders seized the horses of the Gothic nobles and marched immediately on Toledo. Mugaith ibn ar-Rumi was detached with a contingent to take Cordova. Its governor resisted in the 'palace of Roderic', then in the church of St Acisclo, and finally fled, being overtaken seated on his arms. He was the only one of the 'Gothic kings' to be captured alive. Mugaith being a freedman sent by Músa, the feat is sometimes attributed to his master. Táriq and the main body marched straight on Toledo, taking the Roman road through the Sierra Morena. They met with little or no resistance, entered the city and sacked the palace. Oppa was at hand to denounce enemies, who were slaughtered in the city and the neighbouring estates. Isidore records the unseemly flight of Sindere to Rome, where he was in 721. During his lifetime no other metropolitan could be appointed, and without a metropolitan no other king could be consecrated. Reports that Roderic had survived the battle are mere rumours.¹⁵⁶ They are incompatible with other versions which say that his *fideles* recovered his body as they were expected to do; a church at Viseu claimed that his remains were deposited there. No vestiges of him or of anyone else have been found at, or near, the supposed site of the battle.

News of the victory spread rapidly. Poor Berbers were drawn by the prospect of booty and the hope of land. Whole tribes were attracted 'as if by a smoke-signal'. For the promise of land, the Albeldense of c. 883 uses the rare word *farmalio*, related to the English 'farm' and French 'ferme' from Latin 'firmus', a fixed agreement.¹⁵⁷ Some of these returned after the great famine some years later, but others have left place-names on the less fertile areas of the meseta. The story was carried to Músa who duly informed the caliph. The messenger was probably Mugaith, the caliph's man, who made it clear that the conquest belonged to Táriq and himself. Músa was not the man to be deprived of his share in the glory and, fortified by the caliph's tacit assent, gathered the largest Arab force he could. He sailed from Ifríqiyya, and instead of landing where Táriq had done, made for the port and city of Seville, which capitulated with little or no resistance. This was the beginning of the second or Arab conquest, though Isidore makes no clear difference. From Seville Músa prepared to undertake the siege of Mérida, where Roderic's remaining champions had gathered with his widow Egilo. It held out until July 712, when the inhabitants surrendered and some of the Goths fled northward. On leaving Seville, Músa had entrusted the city to its Jewish colony. It was still not certain that the caliph would approve a permanent conquest, with the attendant risks. In any case, the Arab invaders were an army, and would require collaborators. The solution found at Seville could not apply everywhere. If Táriq was committed to the Wittizans, Músa's conquest was of the remains of Roderic's *fideles*. When Mérida fell, most of the provincial capitals were in the hands of the invaders and, when the two leaders met, the fate of the monarchy of Toledo was sealed.

Many Arab accounts emphasize the part played by an Ulyan or Julian, *comes* of Ceuta, who supposedly aided the Muslims. Count Julian would be the father of a daughter seduced by Roderic when sent to the court of Toledo. She informed her father, who wrote to Táriq promising him the wealth of the Spains and saying that the Goths were cowardly. In some

versions the culprit was not Roderic, but Wittiza. Little is known of the Muslim occupation of Tangier except that Tāriq had at his disposal recently converted Berbers, even less of Ceuta, or when and if it passed from Greek into other hands. Isidore says that the Muslims were accompanied by Urbanus, *nobilissimus vir Urbanus Africanae regionis sub dogma catholicae fidei exortus*. The epithet *nobilissimus* was once reserved for members of the Roman imperial house, and should still imply very high rank: *Exortus* ought to imply birthplace. The region of Africa is properly Carthage rather than Mauritania, though it has been extended to mean the whole continent. Urbanus was then a highly placed official from a region governed by the Arabs since 698. He was the informant of Músa rather than of Tāriq. For the Arabs he was Ilyan or Ulyan or Count Julian of Ceuta, some forty miles east of Tangier, strongly placed on the neck of the promontory which forms the southern Pillar of Hercules. It depends for supplies on the G umaras of the hills behind it, or on imports from the East or from the Spains. The Dutch Arabist R Dozy, whose *Recherches* were influential in the nineteenth century, accepted the story that Count Julian had sent his daughter to the court of Toledo, where she was seduced by King Roderic: when Julian was informed, he wrote to Tāriq and offered him the wealth of Spain. Unfortunately, Dozy's own judgement is questionable: he supposed that the author of the *Continuatio* was an impostor pretending to be St Isidore and discredited Isidore of Beja accordingly. A much more accurate and erudite historian is E Lévi-Provençal who published his work in 1944: he accepts the existence of a Count Julian, though not necessarily the tale of his daughter. The Arab legend entered Latin in the twelfth century and has produced a rich crop of ballads and other works of the imagination. Among the Arab historians, ibn al-Athir's *Annals of the Magrib and of Spain* says that an Ilyan, a patrician, had offered 'Uqba presents and recognition, and informed him about Spain and told him of infidel Berbers to the south. But this was two decades ago, long before the fall of Carthage. In speaking of Roderic, he says that nobles sent their children to Toledo and found them spouses: Roderic had seduced the daughter of Julian, governor of Algeciras, Ceuta and other places, who in anger made contact with Músa, urging him to undertake the conquest late in AH 90, or November 708 (when Roderic was not yet king). Músa then informed the caliph, and Tāriq made a descent on Tarifa and Algeciras in April 711. The Moroccan al-Maqqarī, who wrote his *Analecs*, translated by Gayangos as his *History of the Mohammedan Dynasties of Spain* (London 1840) after 1628, made a comprehensive study of Al-Andalus rather than a chronological history. In Book IV, following ibn Khaldún, he makes Ilyan a Gumara Berber, who acknowledged the Gothic king but surrendered when Músa occupied Tangier: he adds the tale of Roderic and Ilyan's daughter, which Ilyan told to Músa in Qairáwan. Perhaps the only detail worth recording is that Wittiza's unnamed widow tried to exercise authority on behalf of her sons in Roderic's absence.

After reducing Mérida, Músa marched towards Toledo and Tāriq came to meet him. The encounter is said to have been at Almaraz, 'ploughlands'.¹⁵⁸ It is supposed that both leaders passed the winter at Toledo, after which they proceeded to the north-east with the object of reducing Saragossa. There is no account of resistance, and they received the capitulations of local authorities. According to Arab tradition, Músa had established his seniority by striking Tāriq with his whip at their meeting. Sánchez Albornoz supposed that he sent Tāriq into upper Aragon, Lérida and perhaps Barcelona. At Saragossa he received a message from the caliph recalling him, but decided not to obey until he had reduced Gallaecia, travelling by Castile, Leon, Astorga and the Bierzo.¹⁵⁹ At Lugo, Músa received a second, more peremptory, order to

go to Damascus, taking Táriq with him. The first report had not shown him in an altogether favourable light and he collected all the booty and memorabilia he could lay hands on to offer to the caliph. The trophies included a round table imagined to have come from King Solomon and so of prophetic and sentimental value.¹⁶⁰ In order to complete his task and to secure the Mediterranean coast, he sent his son 'Abdu'l-'Aziz to obtain the capitulation of Theodemir, who governed the south-east, known to the Arabs as Tudmir, and later when the guarantees given to Theodemir had lapsed, as Miša, or Egypt, now Murcia. The pact bears a precise date, April 4 713.¹⁶¹ The two conquerors left in September 714, when 'Abdu'l-'Aziz remained as governor, making his headquarters in Seville. They went by Ifriqiyya, where Músa learned of al-Walid's illness. He did not know what reception to expect and delayed his arrival at Damascus until the caliph had died. This occurred on February 25 715, when he was succeeded by his brother Sulayman. The precaution was useless, for the new ruler decided to disgrace both conquerors, to keep the conquest and to appoint governors of his own choosing. The final blow to the ambitions of Músa and the succession of Roderic came when 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, hoping to legitimize the conquest, married Roderic's widow Egilo. It was taken as a proof that he intended to set up an independent monarchy, and he was assassinated in the church of St Rufina in Seville, converted into a mosque, in July or August 717, after the news of Músa's disgrace.

Of Roderic there is no further news. Isidore supposes, like most other writers, that in the battle he lost at once his life, his kingdom and his *patria*, on which he delivers a short but still moving requiem.

The kingdom of Toledo had lasted some 146 years from its foundation by Athanagild and Leovigild.¹⁶² The names of known kings are about twenty, including the usurper Suniefred and the untraced Iudila: there are two dual reigns. A list appended to Isidore ends with Wittiza, who is given eight or nine years and Roderic with three, after which the Saracens exterminated the kingdom of the Goths. Another version gives Roderic three years and adds the date Era 752, or AD, 714, and the fact that the Saracens could not totally seize Hispania.¹⁶³ Yet another version of the list in a codex preserved at Paris ends with Egica, omits Wittiza and Roderic, and adds two more names: Achila, *reg. ann. III*. Ardo, *reg. ann. VII*. Of Ardo nothing further is known, and it is possible to speculate that he might be Ardabast or someone else. But Miles refers to nine coins of Achila which he regards as genuine, mentioning one more dismissed as a fabrication. Six are marked Narbonne, one is marked Gerona: he does not describe it, not having seen it: it was found at Castel-Roussillon. The other, marked Tarragona, was found at Rosas and belongs to a known type. Their weight is a little below those of Roderic, but heavier than the weak average for Wittiza. Miles thought that there was insufficient evidence to give a chronology for the pieces from Narbonne, but sufficient to support a reign of three years. There is of course no suggestion that Achila reigned in Toledo or anywhere but the places shown on the coins.

The chief speculation built upon this tenuous, if real, base is that Achila, who has been given the style of Achila or Akhila II, was an otherwise unknown son of Wittiza. F Fernández Guerra, writing in 1889, made him one of three sons. An Arab tradition gives the names of three brothers, Olmund, Ardabast and Romulus. The three were promised by the caliph each a thousand estates or villages, Olmund those in the west with residence in Seville, Ardabast,

those in the centre, with residence in Cordova, and Romulus the rest. Oppa, whose fate is otherwise unknown, is said to have perished on going to the Asturias to attempt to persuade Pelayo that further resistance was useless. Another version makes it Olmund who died in this quest. He certainly died young, for his daughter Sara 'the Goth' asserted her right to succeed on her father's death against the claim of her uncle Ardabast, who lost the case but survived to become *comes* of the Christians in Cordova, the spokesman of the Christian community under Muslim rule, while Sara was given an Arab husband whose progeny maintained the Wittizan tradition.

If Achila II were a son of Wittiza, he would have to be identified with Romulus, but Romulus is given as the third son. If Achila were the first, he, not Olmund, would have succeeded their father. If he were an elder but not legitimate son, he would not have any claim at all, and Oppa would not have espoused the cause of Olmund. The date of Wittiza's death is debatable, but his own age makes it unlikely that he had an illegitimate son older than Olmund and therefore qualified to succeed in spite of their uncle's patronage of Olmund. It has further been postulated that Achila was an elder illegitimate but favourite son who had been appointed to govern Saragossa under the patronage of a loyal *dux*, who had him proclaimed after the appointment of Roderic. The coins certainly do not show that Achila ever reigned in Toledo, nor even in Saragossa. This might explain Roderic's going on his appointment to the north-east, but there are other equally plausible explanations for this.

It may be recalled that Achila I was the first Visigothic noble from Gothic Gaul to rule after the Ostrogothic interlude, and there is therefore some ground for linking the name with the nobility established in the north-east. Other reconstructions amount to little more than an unwillingness to discard the hypothesis put forward by Fernández Guerra. In any case, they would not deprive Roderic of the dubious distinction of being 'the last of the Goths'.

NOTES

1. *El rapto de Europa*, p. 66 of my translation, London, George Unwin & Allen, 1959, where the philosopher and historian gives his own answer.
2. Camões, *Lusiads*, III, xviii; Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, II, xxix.
3. Thus Professor H. Ament of Berlin, surveying the Germanic peoples, finds (at Herpes) there are no traceable remains of the Visigoths from all the Gaulish territories they lost to the Franks in 507. Even in areas which were under the Goths' control for a long time after (Septimania), finds of a German nature, which can be dated to the fifth century, are extremely rare (in *The Northern World: the history and heritage of northern Europe, AD 400-1100*, ed. D. M. Wilson, London, Thames & Hudson, 1980, 59).
4. Cf. several of the contributors to *The Visigoths*, ed. P. Heather, Woodridge, Boydell, 1999, who range far and deep, with rather disappointing results.
5. E. Condurachi and C. Daicoviciu, *Romania*, 1970, with profuse illustrations, cover the ages from the Neolithic to the 4th-7th centuries AD.
6. For a distant reflection of the Goths of old, cf. the *Poema*, l. 760, 'Las carbonclas del yelmo echogelas aparte cortole el yelmo', where *carbonclas* are probably rubies or red glass beads, recalling the form of the helmet of Ciumesti, doubtless also used by the Saxons and others.
7. 'Iam didici Getici Sarmaticeque loqui', *Tristia*, I, xii, 660.
8. Zosimus, *New History*, III, vi.
9. To be distinguished (?) from the monastery of St Saba in Jordan, which drew many monks in the time of John Moschos and is described by W. Dalrymple, *From the Holy Mountain*, London, Flamingo, 1998.
10. E. A. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966, asserts that Ulfila did not convert the Gothic people (at large). The famous Gothic Bible of Ulfila, prized by the University of Uppsala, was probably copied for Theodoric the Ostrogoth in Italy (476-526). No earlier copy is known. It does not appear to have reached the Visigoths in Aquitania or in Spain.
11. Thompson considers her in a brief appendix, but dismisses the evidence as slight.
12. Malchus makes *magistriani* imperial mounted couriers.
13. The name of Hermanric is recorded as Eomanric, with those of a dozen members of his retinue, in the Saxon poem *Widsith*, at a distance of several centuries.
14. Fragment 1.

15. It is in Riese's *Anthologia latina*, 1894, and is dated before the seventh century, and in West Gothic style. *Eils*=*Heil*; *matzia* is meat, food; *ia* is akin to German *ja*. The only doubtful word is *scopia*: *skapja* is innkeeper, steward. I am indebted to the vast linguistic knowledge of Dr K. Kobbervig of Vancouver. (Zosimus has noted the Gothic propensity to take supplies in the market without paying).
16. *New History*, IV, 3.
17. Ammianus, the last great Roman historian, ends his work with the death and obituary of Valens. The story is continued by Zosimus, writing in Greek much later (518-527), who disposes of an array of written sources, some contradictory. The version in Spanish of J. M. Candau, *Nueva Historia*, 1992, summarizes in footnotes many modern amendments. R. C. Brockley prints, translates and annotates the fragments of Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus in *Fragments of the Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire*, Liverpool, 1981 and 1986. Eunapius is anti-Christian and writes from afar without personal experience of affairs. Olympiodorus of Thebes covers 404 to 425, and is a well-travelled Egyptian diplomat with an eye for character and situation, composing memoirs rather than history.
18. Pagans, dwellers in *pagi* or rustics, was a word loosely applied to adherents of the old religion. Christianity, originally urban, left landowners to provide churches and clergy for their people, with no provision for independent villagers. In the Gauls, the Pannonian ex-officer, Martin, bishop of Tours, was distinguished for having carried the faith to the independent villages, at one of which he died in 397. The word heathen is akin to the Gothic *haithno*, a heathen woman.
19. In 386 (?), Priscillian's career is examined by H. Chadwick, *Priscillian of Avila*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976, with a detailed account of the theological issues. He is disposed to accept the case for acquittal: St Martin favoured a pardon.
20. Eunapius says that it was believed that the Goths carried their own gods with them and that their priests or monks in dark habit were wolves in sheep's clothing. Fragment 56.
21. N. H. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays*, London, Athlone Press, 1960, 297, n 112.
22. A little junior to his younger son Honorius, and next to him in line of succession: there were also two daughters, Maria and Thermantia.
23. Eunapius, who gives details of the campaign, calls both Gainas and Stilicho Scythians, using the word loosely for Germanic (Fragment 60).
24. IV, 59, inferring that the senators remained unconvinced: not otherwise confirmed. To some extent the Goths had an advantage over other barbarians in that their leaders professed Arian Christianity.
25. Fragment 1. Blockley, *op.cit.*, regards this as too hostile to Stilicho to come from Olympiodorus, and notes that Zosimus states that Alaric was in Epirus when the agreement was made. However, Eunapius says that it was Rufinus who sent Alaric into Greece to benefit himself at the expense of the Greek cities.
26. Eunuchs were an Eastern affectation repugnant to the West. It may be doubted whether Claudian chose to distinguish between them and celibates. Rome had rejected the example of Origen, but his sermons were quoted by both Ambrose and Jerome, *Early Church Fathers*, 204. Claudian's recourse to classical imagery gained some credibility after Ambrose died in 397 and the pressure against paganism was relaxed.
27. Recently, according to B. H. Warmington, *The North African Provinces from Diocletian to the Vandal Conquest*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1954, 12, citing Orosius.

- Alexandria was indisputably of the East and supplied Constantinople with cavalry: Libya was part of the granary that fed Rome.
28. 'Rerum sic admonet usus', 1. 128.
 29. Claudian adds the defence of Hasta. Hasta, now Asti, is beyond the Roman military headquarters at Ticinum, now Pavia. If so, Alaric's men had ranged far to the west. The battle at Verona is not otherwise recorded and has been placed in 403, if it was indeed a separate campaign.
 30. The Ostrogoths occupied the Gothic highlands of Slovenia, where Theoderic the Ostrogoth was in 474.
 31. The description of Arcadius as 'governed like an ox' owes much to Claudian and Stilicho's hatred of Rufinus. Neither brother had the opportunity to display military capacity, but Arcadius made prudent appointments, while Honorius, twice a widower in his youth, never asserted himself for long, if ever.
 32. He is supposed to have found an advantageous marriage. The suggestion that he died on his honeymoon appears to be a speculation by Vollmer.
 - 33.. R. 419-429
 34. Mme Demougeot, author of an article on Constantine and a very thorough study of the period, *De l'unité à la division de l'Empire romain, 395-410*, Paris, Maisonneuve, 1951, speaks of a planned withdrawal by the Romans. But there was no attempt to make a stand at Lugdunum or anywhere else, even Vienne. She concludes that Constantine was 'not a British patriot', but attempted to defend the Gauls and to keep the barbarians out of the south-east until Honorius could raise an army: this is not quite how I see it.
 35. They were ignorant about the rest of the Spains. The poet and professor of Bordeaux Ausonius, whom Gratian made consul, in his *Order of Noble Cities*, thought that Braga was on the sea-coast. When he chided his friend Paulinus for going to live among the uncivilized Spaniards, his friend, who had married a Spaniard and took to religion, replied that he knew of Ilerda and Bilbilis through his classical reading, but knew nothing of such cities as Gerona and Barcelona.
 36. His object was to negotiate, as the fragment of Olympiodorus states. Mme Demougeot says that they planned to take Italy. Olympiodorus, Fragment 15, as quoted by the Christian Sozomen.
 37. A unique silver *siliqua* marked Nic for Nice, might suggest that the British took the coastal road. How it came to be struck or deposited there is unexplained.
 38. The sources differ. Olympiodorus, Fragment 17, makes Constantine's son Augustus defeated by the barbarians, with whom Gerontius made peace and set up his son Maximus. He then pursued Constans and brought about his death. Sozomen draws on this for a Christian moral. Gerontius was besieged in his house at Vienne and bade his wife Nunnitia flee. She refused to leave him. He fought with the aid of his Alan servant, and then killed the Alan, Nunnitia and finally himself. This made her a Christian heroine. Maximus sought shelter with the barbarians. Zosimus supposes that Constans was made Augustus to supersede Gerontius, who therefore rebelled (see also Bury). However, Maximus did not flee to the barbarians, but stayed with the 'Celtic' or British legion.
 39. I have not attempted to unravel the course of the negotiations in detail. They presumably took place in barrack-room Latin, which Alaric would understand. For illiterate Goths symbolic actions were important as much as words. The accounts,

fragmentary, are in any case one-sided, and did not follow the logic of the chess-board.

40. The date is given in the “Annals of Ravenna”, Blockley, II, 217, n. 50 rejecting Photius’ statement that they were executed at Carthage as a mistake, though followed by Bury.
41. The priest Orosius, writing in Palestine, heard that the fleet was the largest ever known, with 37,000 ships (*Seven Books against the Pagans*, VII, 42). It had increased in the telling, by how much who shall say.
42. Olympiodorus puts the number of Radagaesus and his *optimates* at 12,000, and some of whom were recruited by Stilicho (Fragment 9, ambiguously put), who had thirty Roman units: both figures are suspect.
43. With a wide diffusion in the Middle Ages. The catch-phrase about Romania and Gothia is the starting-place of J. M. Wallace-Hadrill’s *The Long-haired Kings and Other Studies in Frankish History*, London, Methuen, 1962.
44. A. H. M. Jones published his ‘reconstructed’ text in his *Later Roman Empire 284-602*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1964. He applies the units named in the *Notitia dignitatum*, the calendar of Roman offices revised to about 420. However, the Letter is directed to *all* the loyal troops serving in the Spains. The *speculatores* and the Britones are named because they were not regular members of the Roman forces, the former being traders used as spies, and the latter the remains of Constantine’s Celtic legions, then loyal. Mention of other units by name would have been invidious. Mme Demougeot’s reference to its ‘Latin barbare’ misunderstands its nature. It was couched in high-flown courtly language not always understood by medieval copyists.
45. The annalist Marcellinus, c. 518, with *continuatio* to 548, confuses this with Honorius’ tricentennialia celebrated on January 23 422, just before his death.
46. ‘Cum sabinianus quodam tempore erede praelatus in Hispania est ob infestatione diversarum gentium barbarorum.’ ‘Erede’ can only be the Latin for heir in the sense of successor. Nothing is known of this Sabinian, deceased. Sidonius tells a friend that his lineage is not overshadowed ‘even by the Sabinians’, who are thus a highly-placed Gallo-Roman family, and probably Dardanus’ choice for the task.
47. Later Riccimer used the title, though of barbarian stock, the grandson of King Wallia, and it came to mean little more than imperial delegate.
48. The dates are given by Hydatius, then still a lad studying in the East. He notes his *conversio*, or entry into the priesthood, in 416, possibly before his return to his native Gallaecia.
49. The Greek Procopius, writing c. 550, speaking of the Quads, says that there were other Quads to the west near the Franks, by which he means the main body of the Sueves. Gregory of Tours, writing in the sixth century, says ‘suevi id est Alamanni’, meaning that the Sueves were part of the main Germanic people, the Alamanni, ‘all men’. The Quads were a migrant branch to their east. Whether they came with the Vandals is not clear: Hydatius first refers to a Suevic king Hermeric in 419.
50. Half a century later Sidonius depicts a barbarian wedding. The flaxen-haired couple retire to their wagon with its shelter of pelts. It was cluttered up with a jumble of weapons, culinary ware, covers and whatever else they possessed.
51. Olympiodorus (Fragment 12) says that dry bread or biscuit is called *bucellatum*, and used as a scornful nickname for soldiers, *bucellarii*. In Fragment 4 he adds that in the time of Honorius the word was applied to both Romans and Goths. Similarly, *federati* was given to a diverse and mixed body of men, as in the army of Alaric.

52. Cf. my note on the Britones of Gallaecia in *Estudios mindonienses*, III, 1987, reprinted in my *Essays on Iberian History and Literature, from the Roman Empire to the Renaissance*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2000.
53. Marcellinus supposes mistakenly that he died with Jovinus.
54. Maximus is the subject of a well-known section of the *Mabinogion*, Maxen's Dream, in which as emperor of Rome he is made to populate Armorica between the Seine and Loire, or Little Britain. A Welsh legend makes the depopulation of Britain a cause of the Saxon conquest, which Bede places between 449 and 456. Lady Guest in her translation (1838) makes Maxen the usurper Magnus Maximus, who did not need to bring whole legions from Britain, much less to set them in Gallaecia. I am grateful to Sir Rees Davies for explaining *Maxen Wledig* as a derivative from *gwlad*, country, in the sense of ruler or lord.
55. He was clearly at Chaves in 460, but sent suspects on to Mérida for trial. There was an orthodox bishop at Lugo in 433 and another at Astorga in 445, the chief cities of the three Roman conventus that constituted Roman Gallaecia. Hydatius' work is meticulously edited by A. Tranoy, *Chronique d'Hydace*, Paris, 1974, 2 v., most of whose comments I have accepted. I retain the Latin spelling to distinguish it from Galicia, which does not include Astorga or the Bierzo.
56. Hydatius knew of the death of the patrician Felix at Ravenna in 430, but communications with the East were intermittent.
57. A Celtic term for a gathering or association. It was used by Orosius in speaking of a rebellion of ignorant rustics easily quashed by Roman troops a century before, not necessarily in use at that time. It is found in the territory of Armorica, itself a Celtic word from *mor*, sea, in the sense of coastal, and also in the Alps in the time of Sarus, and especially in Tarraconensis.
58. This affords a probable context for the cluster of Suevic settlers in villages round Tuy, the only place north of their legal territory where they were present in force.
59. Hydatius places this late in 448. Agiulf is said to have been a Varn, but the Goths set him up to succeed Rechiarius, which suggests that he was a dissident in command of the Sueves in Baetica, who rejected the succession of Rechiarius.
60. Who Basil was is far from clear. If Rechiarius had a change of heart, it followed his meeting with Theodoric. It was not what Hydatius would hope from a catholic king. Theodoric had reigned for thirty years and nursed the prospect of an all-Arian alliance by marrying one daughter to a Sueve and another to the heir of Gaiseric, Huneric.
61. Tranoy notes the appearance of Halley's comet in May-August 451 and an eclipse of the sun in September, with Biblical analogies.
62. His fall is the subject of Sidonius' letter to Serranus, II, xiii.
63. Sidonius' letters are not necessarily in order of date, but this is in Book One (of eight). So long as the Gothic king adhered to the *foedus* and Avitus was emperor, Sidonius accepted Theodoric and even their religion, which later he would not have failed to disparage.
64. Ed. Tranoy, 1974, p. 170. This is part of his Olympiad 310, which suggests some confusion. The entries for 460 and 461 and perhaps 465 appear unusually numerous, while the final three years return to the usual pace of four or five per annum.
65. Ajax was a Galatian, a pocket of Celts who in ancient times were settled in Asia Minor, on the upper course of the River Meander, the frontier of Asia. St Paul had addressed them on their reluctance to believe what they thought the Apostles required.

66. The reign is dated from 466: Hydatius gives 467.
67. Welsh legend had it that Maximus had depopulated the Britains and gives a dramatic version of how the Britons imposed their language on Armorica: Geoffrey of Monmouth puts the emigrants at 100,000, with 30,000 warriors.
68. The fish was the Christian symbol and the languages those of the Bible. The bitter seeds would be the Arians. Hydatius' hope of saving some Suevic souls had to be set aside for some eighty years. Nothing more is heard of the Suevic kings: even their names are lost. St Isidore in his short history of the Sueves merely follows Hydatius, adding that there were several.
69. Among themselves the Goths negotiated by shouting across a brook, which neither party crossed, with their men standing at a more or less respectful distance. With the emperor they either sent missions to Constantinople, or spoke on horseback. The details are in Malchus, a Syrian using Greek, 18–22, Blockley, II, 431 ff. He provides profuse details and no dates, and in the truncated form is not always clear.
70. R. W. Mathison, *Ruricius of Limoges and friends : a collection of letters from Visigothic Gaul*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1994, supposes that it was recovered from the Franks, but the frontier, if any, fluctuated.
71. The network only occasionally reached Hydatius, who mentions seeing a copy of a letter from the bishop of Autun to the *comes* Agrippinus in 451.
72. See Ana Ma Jiménez, 'settlement of the Visigoths', in *Visigoths*, ed. Heather, 1999, 92 ff., who discards some supposed Visigothic toponyms, J. M. Piel and D. Kremer, *Hispano-gotisches Namenbuch : der Niederschlag des Westgotischen in den alten und heutigen Personen- und Ortsnamen der Iberischen Halbinsel*, Heidelberg, C. Winter, 1976, *passim*.
73. Cf. *Namenbuch*, *passim*. Piel and Kremer do not distinguish between Gothic and Suevic in this respect, though their speech would differ.
74. As occurred with Theoderic the Ostrogoth, whose heir predeceased him, and whose Visigothic widow was unable to protect her young son from rapacious kinsfolk.
75. Paul's arrival is not dated. The *Lives of the Fathers of Mérida*, *Vitas patrum emeritensium*, VPE, was composed by an anonymous deacon c. 620, who professed to know no history before his own youth. The English version of A. T. Fear (*Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1997) inserts the word Visigothic, which Paul and Fidelis were not.
76. The date is not recorded. An inscription shows that the clergy-house was founded by Lucretius, the seventh incumbent, and finished by his successor Andreas in 572.
77. In saying this, Procopius calls him a usurper or tyrant over the Visigoths.
78. John Moschos, c. 550 - c. 619 composed his travels in 610. Martin arrived by sea in c. 550, was consecrated bishop in 556 and consecrated his abbey at Dume in 558.
79. Germanic names were permitted by baptism. There are no documents before 572. The gravestones, of peculiar form, are uninscribed and undated. The place-names show an element of pre-Roman or Celtic, often not now identifiable.
80. Gregory of Tours, *The History of the Franks*, II, 41. This version of the name is not given by any other writer.
81. His history is chiefly remarkable for its uniqueness. Earlier attempts by Renatus Frigeridus and Sulpicius Alexander are lost except for the few fragments he cites. The *vita* of St Martin of Tours, by Sulpicius Severus, supplied Gregory with numerous miracles, which neither Martin might have cared for. St Martin of Tours is best

- remembered, not for a miracle, but for an act of charity, cutting his military cloak in half to share with a poor rustic.
82. Sagontia is often read as Sagunto, but this is north of Valencia, with no direct road to Cordova. Others prefer Gigüenza on the road from Sidonia to Seville, *cf.* E. A. Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1969, App. 320.
 83. In his conquest of 711 Táriq, having defeated Roderic near Sidonia, made straight for Toledo, having detached a force to occupy Cordova. There is no contemporary evidence of the marriage treaties, but the claims are made clear in the treaty of Andelot concluded in November 588 or 589 under the eyes of Bishops Felix and Gregory of Tours, who gives the full text, *The History of the Franks*, IX, 20. There may have been some redistribution, but Galswinth received Bordeaux, Limoges, Lescar, and La Ciutat, which then passed in theory to Brunhild, who had received Tours, Poitiers, Albi, Aire and Labourd.
 85. Theodora, the first wife, is supposed to have been the daughter of Severianus, the governor of Cartagena, who fled with his family to Seville, where her brother Leander became bishop. Thompson's allusion to Godeswinth, Athanagild's widow, as his 'unprepossessing relict' is gratuitous, resting on Gregory's accusations against her.
 86. John of Biclaro's annals begin here and end with the conversion to catholicism of his son Reccared, announced in 590 at Toledo III, a triumph clouded by the plot of Argimund, which he alone records. His editor, J Madoz, 1960, places his birth in about 540, and St Isidore says at Scallabis, now Santarém, of mixed parentage, his mother being a native and his father Gothic, whose language he spoke. He was sent to the East to be educated, 558-575, but was exiled to Saragossa, which then had an Arian bishop, being himself bishop of Gerona in 590. He founded the monastery of Vallclaro near Poblet where he wrote his annals; this information is not certain: Menéndez Pidal placed Biclaro at Béjar.
 87. P. David in editing the Suevic *Parochiale* defends the authenticity of the list of churches, but denies the existence of two metropolitanates in a single province (*Etudes historiques*, 1947). The document is clear: Nitigisus of Lugo was metropolitan of the non-Suevic sees of Gallaecia. The superiority of Braga lay in its primacy and in royal recognition.
 88. A. Almeida Fernandes, *Paróquias suélicas e dioceses visigóticas*, Arouca, 1987, regards the *ecclesiae* as Roman and the *pagi*, as Suevic villages. This might reflect the earlier St Martin's conversion of several *pagi* in Gaul, at one of which he died in 395. It is questionable.
 89. The typical form was the *lavra*. The word occurs as a place-name near the coast north of Oporto, described in the Middle Ages as of ancient foundation.
 90. St Isidore says Rucones. The least improbable of the suggestions is the Arcones, mentioned in the classical writers.
 91. Perhaps after Sabaria in Hungary, now Szombathely, the birthplace of St Martin of Tours. Similarly Panóias recalls Pannonia and replaces Constantim in Bragança.
 92. The *Lives of the Fathers* calls him a Goth. The *Namenbuch* does not give the name or anything like it. Basque has the root *Maus-*, the dwarf elder or *sauquillo*, giving the name Maustegui, Michelena, *Apellidos vascos*, San Sebastián, 1953, n° 436.
 93. An inscription from Villamartin, Seville, commemorates a *dux* named Zerezind, who died aged forty-four on August 30 578, perhaps Hermenegild's predecessor.

94. John of Biclaro says only that he went to relieve Seville and died there, his son succeeding in his kingdom in Gallaecia. Biclaro places the gathering of Leovigild's forces in 582, the close siege of Seville and death of Miro in 583, and the fortification of Italica and fall of Seville and capture of Hermenegild at Cordova in 584.
95. The only ruler of the Sueves to put his name on a gold coin was Odiacca or Audecca, who appears on a unique piece found at Castelo Branco.
96. In a society where 'Germans' took Latin names, and less often 'Romans' Germanic, the classification as 'Germans' or 'Spaniards' (?) adopted by R. Grosse (*Las fuentes de la época visigoda y bizantinas*, Barcelona, 1947) and followed by E. A. Thompson as a statistic (*The Goths in Spain*, 338) is illusory. The use of two names, one of each kind, is uncommon.
97. A combination continued in Spain, where Philip's IV *valido*, Olivares, was *Conde-Duque*.
98. The Latin *servus* gives serf, of whom the church had many as peasants deemed to belong to the land. A way out was provided by emancipation, a laudable act of charity. Even so, he remained a client. In 619, St Isidore held that a *colonus* who had fled his home to enter the church elsewhere must be returned since by civil law he still belonged to his birthplace. In a mingled society it is unwise to assume that general principles held everywhere.
99. With the final piece of Audeca and one other found in the Gothic hoard at Reccopolis. On this, see my 'Reis suevos e a igreja de São Martinho', *Nummus*, xxi-xxv, Oporto, 1998-2002 and in *Reinos ibéricos na idade média*, I, 440-461, Oporto, 2003.
100. His age is sometimes given as eighteen. If Reccared married Baddo after 589 he could not have been much more than eleven. If much before, under an Arian rite, he might be thought illegitimate. In 594 Reccared had been considered free to marry the Frank Rigintha.
101. Its minutes exist only as preserved in Toledo XII, in 681.
102. Grosse comments that this shows that the Goths no longer feared the Franks (*op.cit.*, p. 242). The defeat at Poitiers was a hundred years before, and the context points only to more recent events.
103. The *Namenbuch* notes numerous bearers of the name, and five place-names, all in Portugal or Galicia. The best-known is Gondomar, Oporto.
104. Fredegar adds the suppression of a *dux* Francius who had held Cantabria for the Franks for a long time. The Franks are not known ever to have ruled Cantabria. It is feasible that an adventurer so named should have reached the area during their attempts to intervene on behalf of the Sueves. The existence of the sea-route is shown by the toponym Monte Suevo.
105. Eugenius II, the metropolitan summoned by the king in 646, had been a monk in Toledo and archdeacon at Saragossa, and was the most prolific poet of his day.
106. A. T. Fear, introducing his English translation, says that Sisebut sponsored the cult of St Leocadia of Toledo. Eugenius II was buried in her church.
107. One of its most-quoted aphorisms is that regicide was the disease of the Goths. He refers to the end of Thiudis and Thiudisclus, the Ostrogoths, but after Witteric, these cases were few; the record of the Franks speaks for itself.
108. Fear resumes some of the discussion, and favours the theory of a hoped-for catholic alliance. This is speculative: the view of Sisebut as deeply religious with a keen interest in scholarship can easily be overstretched.
109. The classical *frater*, used in a spiritual sense, has been replaced in both Portuguese and Spanish by *germanus*, a blood-brother, giving *irmão*, *hermano*, with the appropriate

- feminines. The two seem to have been interchangeable for a time.
110. Thompson remarks that in his history of the Goths, finished shortly before his death, Isidore could hardly have told us less except by not writing at all. But so meticulous a lawyer as Isidore was in 619 recorded only what he thought reasonably certain. Isidore was intent on the restoration of the Roman provinces as they were in late imperial times. It must have cost him much to admit that the seat of Cartaginensis was not at Toledo, and (perhaps a little less) that Tarragona had yielded place to Saragossa.
 111. No genuine coin of Reccared II is known to Miles, who rejects the arguments of Reinhart that a coin marked Reccared and 'Ispali pius' belongs to this reign, G. Miles, *The Coinage of the Visigoths of Spain: Leovigild to Achila II*, New York, 1952, 28.
 112. *The History of the Goths*, 65, with the date 'fifth year of Swinthila'. Riccimer was 'adsumptus pari cum patre', and possessed the paternal virtues in merit and appearance.
 113. Miles, *Coinage*, 30. It has been suggested that Iudila stands for Geila, the brother of Swinthila, but the two names appear distinct. Heiss admitted a coin from Mérida of Khintila marked 'victor', but Miles does not record this epithet.
 114. Pampilica, a diminutive of Pamplona, the Roman stronghold in Navarre, where the monastery perhaps served for the indoctrination of the Gothic mass.
 115. Gregory of Tours had recorded similar incidents. Bishop Avitus (572-594), after a mob had burned the synagogue because a Jew had attacked catechumens, declared that he would not force them, but would welcome converts: a large number then accepted his invitation, and others left Arvernica for Marseille (*The History of the Franks*, V, ii). Gregory reproves a bishop for trading with Jews. He himself was ever ready for debate but admits his own failure to convince a Jew in the royal presence. Froga's fault was in disbelieving a bishop.
 116. *The History of the Franks*, V 44, with little success.
 117. Miles gives a table of variants in his note on epigraphy. Toponyms offer less variants, except the Castilian B/V, as in Elbora/Elvora.
 118. R Charanis, *Armenians in the Byzantine Empire*, Lisbon, 1963, Candau notes the forms Artabazakos, Latinized as Narbazaicus. Eunapius says (Fragment 71) that Abraskous, who put down Isaurian rebels in 404, was an Armenian nicknamed Harpazakios because of his rapacity.
 119. His opponent may have been Iudila, though this would stretch Miles' surmise.
 120. Sidonius refers to the *magistris palatinis et militaribus*: the palatines have now come to include the military. If there is an apparent duplication, this may be owing to slips by the notaries.
 121. The single reference to Recceswinth's proficiency in the barbarian language may be set aside. It occurs in a strangely garbled version of the Continuatio, in which Khindaswinth becomes Gondelo and Recceswinth is reduced to 'soa v annis', the rest of the phrase being unintelligible, *Chronica minora*, II, 387. It is not in the more correct text (*ibid.* p. 343).
 122. The misunderstanding goes back to the earliest Spanish writer on the subject, the Marqués de Valdeflores, *Congeturas sobre las medallas de los Reyes Godos y Suevos de Espana*, Málaga, 1759, and since much repeated, v. J. M. Peixoto Cabral and D. M. Metcalf, *Moeda Sueva: Suevic Coinage*, Oporto, 1997, and my 'Coinage of the Suevic period', and 'Reis suevos e a igreja de S Martinho', in *Nummus* 1998-2002.
 123. His *Vita*, composed after 680, places him after St Isidore as a restorer of the church.
 124. The council at Mérida had tendered its thanks to Recceswinth by requiring that litanies be said for the king's success when he was on campaign: according to Grosse, the

practice was previously unknown. Whether Recceswinth was then on campaign or whether there was overt resistance to the transfer of the disputed dioceses remains also unknown.

125. Thompson, *The History of the Goths*, 252, n 1
126. L. Vázquez de Parga (*La División de Wamba. Contribución al estudio de la historia y geografía eclesiástica de la edad media española*, Madrid, 1943) catalogues 27 versions and summarizes critical opinions. It is not mentioned at Toledo XI of 675, the only general council of Wamba's reign, but it may be related to the unrecorded provincial councils (*cf.* its canons ii-v). The original would be eclipsed by the Muslim invasion, which was anti-episcopal, but tolerant of monasticism. The bones of St Isidore were brought from Seville for Ferdinand I of Castile and his wife Sancha to Leon, where they were reinterred in the cathedral. Their son Alfonso VI recovered Toledo in 1090 and assumed the title of emperor, formerly used by the Leonese. The general form of the *Divisio* is ascribed to Bishop Pelayo of Oviedo (1119-1142).
127. Steven appears at Mérida, which he represented at Toledo in 681, when Wamba was deposed.
128. The *Annales du Maghreb et de l'Espagne*, translated by Fagnan, Alger, 1998, are extracted from his fourteen volumes, composed in the East.
129. *Conquête de l'Afrique du Nord et de l'Espagne*, ed. Gateau, Alger, Carbonel, 1947, 42-45.
130. Pimenius is not known to have left the East. His transfer might be construed as offering a distant precedent for St James at Compostela.
131. A reference to moneyers concerned with the production of coin.
132. Zeumer, followed by Thompson, says that he was already dead by 683. Lucas of Tuy, who follows a northern tradition hostile to Erwig, says that Wamba lived twelve years at Pampliega, which would prolong his existence until after 690. Neither statement is adequately supported.
133. Thompson thought that Leo addressed the letter to the deceased Quiricus in ignorance. This appears less probable. Rome rarely corresponded in writing with the Hispanic church. Leo II himself died in July 683, more than a year before Toledo XIV.
134. Miles, *Coinage*, 156 ff.
135. Wamba and Erwig had reigned for only eight and seven years. Rulers were old men at fifty, and to be acceptable a son required to have reached the 'perfect age', be legally married and preferably with an heir and authority to have his decisions enforced. Only Leovigild, Khindaswinth and Egica were able to impose their sons by associating them in their own lifetime. The regency of an uncle risked usurpation, as with Amalaric. The marriage of an elder sister to a strong figure bore a similar risk. This could be reduced by marriage to a niece, and removed if the bridegroom was also the acknowledged successor.
136. *Namenbuch*, n° 58, calls the name specifically Hispano-Gothic, not recorded earlier, but later much favoured. It gives some toponyms, two in Burgos, and it is carried by some medieval churchmen.
137. The only non-Germanic names are Vitulus and Severinus.
138. *The History of the Goths*, 243
139. Dagobert had returned from a long exile in 680 and was assassinated in 684: his bishops considered him despotic, *cf.* Wallace-Hadrill, *Long-haired Kings*, 238. The Frankish bishops were content to be ruled by a boy or an inept king, who left affairs of state to the *maiores palatii*.

140. Hubner records an inscription from a church at Belén recognising Egica with a date in May 691. Miles notes a coin from Guadix marked 'victor'. These drops of information, however welcome to the thirsting investigator, need not be overvalued.
141. Vestiges of the palace, the Pazos del Rey, exist near Tuy. The Fafes (now Pfaff) were loyal servitors of Tarasia, the first queen of Portugal, 1112-1126, when she was besieged by her Leonese half-sister Urraca in the tiny and ancient castle of Lanhoso perched on a height above the River Ave. The name survives in the village of Fafe near Braga.
142. *Crónica de Alfonso III*, ed. Z García Villada, Madrid, 1918. The 'segunda redacción', included by the editor, gives information not provided in the so-called 'primitiva'. It says that before dealing with Roderic's reign it will explain his lineage: Theodefred was a son of Khindaswinth whom his father had disowned, *reliquit*, at an early age.
143. Ibn al-Athir, trans. Fagnan, 27. The dates, gathered in a late compilation, are by no means certain.
144. There is a single medieval reference to another, XVIII, attributed to Wittiza and Guntheric as metropolitan. Nothing is known of it and no surviving document appears to refer to it. Thompson says that the document was lost, *The History of the Goths*, 249. No date is suggested. Isidore of Beja does not assign a council to Wittiza. The chronicle of Alfonso III states that Wittiza called no council. Once he was associated, a council *ad regem confirmandum* may have been considered improper.
145. Miles classifies the coins from Toledo in more than a dozen issues, noting that the quality of the gold varies considerably. The single coin of Suniefred is light, and some of Egica's not much heavier, though others are of good standard. Both the rate of survival and the extent of reminting are unknown, so that the significance of these observations is doubtful. Since Miles' day the number of known pieces has increased by perhaps half, but they have not been subjected to the same critical examination. However, the general level of weight declined steadily by about a tenth from the level sustained under Khindaswinth and Recceswinth.
146. Edited together, somewhat confusedly, by T. Noldeke, in Mommsen's MGH, *Chronica minora*, II, 3334 ff. He explains the formidable textual difficulties in an 'Epiternum' (p. 368).
147. More remote is the chronicle of Lucas, bishop of Tuy in the 13th Century.
148. 'Decrepito iam patri pariter regnat', in Isidore's words.
149. Thompson, *The History of the Goths* 275, devotes a page to the subject, regarding it as a symptom of a society in which the administrative machinery is breaking down.
150. Miles, 156. The studies of metrology by Gomes Marques, Peixoto Cabral and Rodrigues Marinho in *Ensaio sobre história monetária visigótica*, Oporto 1995, using spectroscopic methods over selected specimens, confirm this. Their statistical method may exaggerate the difference. A small improvement at the end of Wittiza's reign reflects only a very small number of specimens. The quantity of known coins for each ruler is affected by the existence of a few large hoards, of which Miles names seven, p 165: there has been at least one since he wrote, the contents of which are widely dispersed. The find at Abusejo near Salamanca in 1932 contained about 110 pieces, 20 from Egica, 53 from the dual reign and 19 from Wittiza. Menéndez Pidal thought that the large number from the dual reign indicated that it lasted longer than is supposed, a view which Miles refuted.
151. *Crónica de Alfonso III*, 105.

152. The *Namenbuch* accepts that Gundered was bishop of Seville. the name is Germanic. An Oppa was bishop of Tuy in 683, before Wittiza was placed there and another of Elche in 693. The name may be a variant of Offila, *comes cubiculariorum et dux* in 653.
153. Illustrated in Miles, *Coinage*, Plate xxxviii. Others, shown on his final plate, are dismissed as forgeries.
154. Cairo, 1944, put into Spanish as vol. iii of Menéndez Pidal's monumental *Historia de España*. Some additions are noted in *Al-Andalus* and *Alcántara*. There is no contemporary Berber account.
155. The Berber tactic may well have been to overwhelm and kill the enemy commander, counting on the resulting demoralization of a leaderless army: this had succeeded in earlier battles with the Byzantine *magistri*.
156. When the young king of Portugal perished at Alcazar Quibir in 1578, rumours of his survival were so persistent that they took shape in the movement called Sebastianism, which still casts its shadow.
157. Ep. Ovet, ch. 16, in *Chronica minora*. Grosse prefers the alternative reading *malo*, which in the context makes no sense.
158. Asín Palacios, *Topónimos árabes*, not now identifiable and perhaps mythical.
159. C. Sánchez Albornoz, 'Itinerario de la conquista', *Cuadernos de historia de España*, Buenos Aires, 1940, 21-74. The course is set chiefly by the system of Roman roads.
160. For comparison, the kingdom of the Sueves lasted some 165 years from c. 420 to 585. The Roman empire in the West ran for over four centuries, and its Christian phase for less than a century.

Twilight of the Goths

The Rise and Fall of the
Kingdom of Toledo c. 565 – 711

By Harold Livermore

Toledo, former capital of Spain, is now one of the most monumental of Spanish cities. In Roman times, it was originally a modest tribal township, which was eventually elevated to a national capital by the Visigoths (one of two main branches of the Goths, who along with their cousins, the Ostrogoths in South Russia, were considered barbarians across Europe). The history of the Visigoth's victory over Rome and the foundation of their own Western empire is an epic story: as dramatic as their subsequent overthrow in a single battle by the Islamic expansion in 710 – 711. Their rise owes much to their service as allies, and later legionaries, of the Roman army. Over time, they gradually shed their tribal attributes and became themselves 'Romanized'. The Goths' sudden collapse arose, similarly to the Romans, from their failure to resolve the problem of succession.

Their legacy is unseen: they left no written history of themselves, and their story has to be pieced together from other accounts. This book attempts to trace their evolutionary passage from a Germanic tribe into conquerors.

Harold Livermore was born in London, and educated in Lincoln, Cambridge and Madrid. He held two awards from Cambridge, was headmaster of the English school in Portugal, and lectured in Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American history at Cambridge. He served in the Foreign Office research department and was Educational Director of the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Councils before becoming Professor of Spanish and Portuguese Studies at the University of British Columbia.

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